

Pusti Self Study

A DIALOGUE WITH THE SELF



- Dr. Jayendra Soni



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Preface

Once I was sitting on the swing in my garden when my mind got engaged in some serious thoughts.

Who am I, what is the significance of my life ? I asked myself.

Suddenly, as if there was an echo from within - "Who are you", somebody questioned me.

It was a great surprise ! Who was asking ? I could'nt understand.

It is said "Parmatma" dwells within all living beings. I guessed, it was my "Inner Being" that was responding.

Eventually, I did'nt know when my introspection turned into a dialogue, and a chain of questions and asnswers continued for quite some days.

It became my habit to sit on the swing everyday and ponder over the replies, and new question would arose out of that. This continued for almost three months, during which I learnt series of subjects, one after the other, covering many pertinent topics of Pushtimarg.

I thought to pen-down my conversation with the "Self", and to publish it for the benefit of those who wish to understand the core of Pushtimarg, with their own efforts.

Here I am, presenting this book in the form of a dialogue, and hope that the reader would involve himself / herself into the conversations to grasp the subjects, so lucidly dealt with.

- Dr. Jayendra Soni.

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1. “KNOW THYSELF”

‘Who are you?’

‘My name is Gopal’

‘I didn’t ask your name! I am asking “Who are you?”’

‘I said “Gopal”’

‘Gopal is the name of Lord Krushna. Are you Krishna?’

‘Oh, no! Gopal is the name given to me by my parents. So, I am known by name Gopal’

‘So, Gopal is the name to identify you! Is’nt it? But, really who you are?’

I got puzzled. So, I said -

‘I am a “Praani”’

‘But, animals too are called “Praani”!’

‘True, but as I breathe, and so do animals too!’

‘But, I am not animal, I am a human being’

‘Then, what is difference between the two?’

‘Man is a rational animal! He can think for his wellbeing!’

He can decide about what is best in his interest. Animals can't!

'Suppose there is a stone, given a name "Gopal". Your name is also same. Will you both be identical?'

'What are you talking? I am a Conscious Being whereas stone is Inert -lifeless'

'Oh, but your body too, is inert! Is'nt it? Then where does lie your consciousness?'

'There is a Conscious element within my body , called "Atma" (soul).'

'But what really Gopal is? your body or the soul?'
Again I got perplexed .

'OK, Do you know that everybody is mortal, no one is immortal! As such, Gopal shall also die some day! Whose death will that be, of your body or soul?'

'I really got confused!

'You might have read that "Soul is immortal". Neither "Atma takes birth nor does it die. As such, when Gopal will die, it can not be the death of your Atma. Therefore, Gopal is not the name of your soul isn't it? , and we know that body vanishes after death. Meaning, Gopal is the name of your body, right?. Then, please tell, who are you?'

My mind was now really disturbed. I wondered 'Do I not know even myself?'

I remembered a quote of great Greek philosopher 'Socrates, who had said "Know thyself" .

But how? asked my mind!

2. “PRAMAAN - MEANS OF KNOWLEDGE”

‘OK. Reply that question, when you find an answer.’

‘Just tell me, what is this in my hand?’

‘It is a Mobile’

‘How do you know that?’

‘When I had seen it for the first time, I understood that it is called “Mobile.”’

‘Nice. Just smell this and tell its fragrance’

‘It smells Rose.’

‘How could you recognise?’

‘Smelling by my nose.’

‘Good. Are you listening this kiratan? What raag is it?’

‘Malkonsha, my favourite raag.’

‘How could you identify it?’

‘Once you hear with your ears, you shall recognise it.’

‘OK, can you tell, how did you acquire these knowledge?’

‘But perception. Directly by experience of my sense organs.’

‘Exactly! One can acquire the knowledge of any material object by direct interaction of the object with one’s sense organs, that is, by “**Perception**” called “**Pratyaksha Pramaan**”.

‘Understood’

‘Now, tell me, do you know your great grandfather?’

‘Of course, I do’

‘Have you seen him?’

‘Oh no! He had died before my birth’

‘Is it?, then how do you know him?’

‘My father had shown me his photograph and told that it was of my great grandfather.’

‘And you believed him?’

‘Why not? My father shall not tell lie.’

‘So you have faith in the statement of your father, is’nt it?’

‘Sure, I am confident that he always speaks truth. There is no reason that he should tell lie!’

‘Nice, tell me, whose is that picture hanging on the wall?’

‘Oh, you do not know? It is of “ShriNathji”.’

‘How did you know that?’

‘My mother had made me to recognise “Shrijibawa” since my childhood’

‘So you believe the statements of your mother too!’

‘What a question? Parents always speak truth!’

‘So, do you understand that one can acquire knowledge of certain facts / things, which cannot be done by direct perception, from the statements of the persons who are supposed to speak nothing but truth?’

‘Definitely. The words of such reliable persons reveal “Truth” only!’

‘Exactly! They impart knowledge about the things not perceivable by sense organs, inference etc., It is called “**Verble Testimony**”.

‘Yes, now I can understand that I acquired knowledge of my great grandfather by “Verbal Testimony”, since I could not see him directly!

‘Good’

3. “SCRIPTURES - SOURCE OF KNOWLEDGE”

‘If you have so much faith in the words of your parents, would you not rely on “**Veda**”?’

‘Veda?, Who is he?. I do not know him?’

‘He is not any person, It is one of our “Shastra”!’

‘What is “**Shastra**”?’

‘One which rules, which controls us, is called “Shastra”. It advises about what man should do and should’nt! Such scriptures are called “**Dharm-Shastra**”. Those which give knowledge about God and Spirituality, are called “**Adhyatm-Shastra**”. “Vedas” are the scriptures containing vast knowledge about “**Reality**” and reality of life.’

‘Who has written “Veda”?’

‘Veda is not written by any person, unlike various “Dharm Granths” of different religious, but it is the knowledge revealed to our ancient “Rushis” in different parts of our country, in their state of meditation!. They did listen, not knowing, who was speaking! As such, Veda is called ‘Apaurushey’. It is believed to be the words of God Himself!’

‘But then, how Veda came into existence, when you said it is “Revealed Knowledge” to various Rushis at different places?’

‘One “**Ved-Vyasji**”, an incarnation of Knowledge aspect of God, collected all the knowledge from different Rushis, and compiled it into four Vedas, namely - Rugved, Yajurved, Saamved, and Atharvaved.’

‘Whether is single composite text?’

‘No, each Veda is divided into four sections, namely (1) **Mantra** or **Samhita**, (2) **Braahman**, (3) **Aaranyak** and (4) **Upanishada**. The first two sections together are known as “**Purva-Kaand**” or “**Karma-Kaand**”, wherein various types of “**Yagnas**” (sacrifices) are described, while the latter parts together are called “**Uttar-Kaand**” or “**Jnaan-Kaand**”. It contains vast knowledge about the “**Supreme Reality**” as well as the explanations regarding universe, individual being and such spiritual subjects.’

‘I have heard a word “**Vedant**”. Does it mean “Veda”?’

‘As “**Upanishad**” is the last section of “Veda”, i.e. end of Veda, it is also known as “**Vedant**”. It is an ocean of Knowledge.’ It is also known as “**Sruti**”, it being the knowledge acquired by “Listening” intuitionaling.

‘Can anyone remember such vast knowledge?’

‘You are right. It is, therefore, Ved-Vyasji as codified the entire Aupanishadic knowledge into 554 “Sutras” (Aphorisms), which can be easily remembered. They are known as “**Brahm-Sutras**” or “**Vedant-Sutras**”.

‘Very exhaustive information!. But, I still have doubt. What is the validity of these scriptures? Is there any proof for that?’ Why should one accept them as TRUTH?

‘Oh! Have you studied geometry in your school?’
‘Definitely. But how does it relavant?’

‘So you know that there is a premises that there are 360 degrees in a circle?’

‘Yes, I know that.’

‘How will you prove it?’

‘Oh!, Don’t you know that **“It is self proved statement”**! It needs not be proved. It is just to be accepted.’

‘Exactly!. Likewise, **“Vedas are self proved”**, as they are the utterances of God Himself!. They don’t require proof. They are to be just relied upon.’

‘Is it?, Agreed.’

‘As you trust the statements of your parents, Vedas are to be accepted as “Truth”. They should not be doubted. God is said to be **“Satya Sankalp”** - meaning **“One who only speaks Truth.”**

‘You mean Vedas are to be taken as **“Verbal Testimony”**?’

‘Absolutely’. ‘Now I understood’

4. “WHO IS GOD?”

‘You said that Vedas are the words of GOD (Bhagawan). They are the statements of TRUTH. I have

been hearing the word BHAGWAN since my childhood. Yet, I have never been able to understand who is HE?. Does HE really exists or is it an imagination?’

‘Besides, there is a BIG QUESTION! Every religious faith talks about their own GOD and claim Him to be the Real One. Some call Him ALLAH or KHUDA, another name Him JESUS. Yet another address as AHUR MAZADA! And in Hinduism! my goodness! Innumerable Gods - RAM, KRUSHNA, SHANKAR, GANESH , unending list. Some time we call ISHWAR or PARMATMA too. Really confusing!’

‘You are right. But wait! Our Veda has given a wonderful explanation. Rugved says - **“THE REALITY IS ONE, BUT DENOTED IN MANY WAYS BY SCHOLARS”**. Does this not solve your dilemm’a?’.

‘OK. I take it. But please tell, what exactly that REALITY is, who is termed as **BHAGAWAN** and worshipped by most of the people world over?’

‘Our Upanishad has made a remarkable statement. It says - **“THE REALITY IS ONE WITHOUT SECOND”**. Meaning - ‘Nothing exists except Reality’. Veda denote It by the word BRAHAMAN. It literally means One who is “Omnipresent”. HE is mysterious and indescribable. We may call Him **“Supreme Power”**, who is Omnipotent and Omniscient too.’

‘But, how do we believe this?’

‘As said earlier, Veda-Upanishads are “Self proved Testimony”. Their statements are to be accepted

without doubt.'

'But can you substantiate these statements by any other independent scriptures?'

'Off course! **BRAHMASUTRAS** are one which are codified version of Upanishads, written by Ved-Vyasji, and well accepted as an "Authority" by all scholars. Besides, have you heard of **BHAGAVAD GITA** and **BHAGAVAT**?'

'Do'nt know much, but I understand that "Gita" is the sermons given by Krushna to his friend Arjun in battlefield, and "Bhagvat" is the compilation of stories written by Vyasji, who is believed to be an incarnation of God.' But what are their relavance?'

'I understand your anxiety. Only statements of GOD can be accepted as "Verble Testimony", right?'

'You only suggested that!'

'Then let us find, if these scriptures can be taken as "Verble Testimony"?'

'Do you know how "Bhaagavat" was created?'

'It is said to have been written by Ved-Vyas'

'Was it written as the storybook or a novel being usually written by imagination?'

Naturally, it should be like that! Or whether various stories were told to Vyasji by somebody?'

'No. On the advice of SriNaradji, who is yet another incarnation of God, Ved-Vyasji had actually seen various "Lila" (sports) of The Lord in the state of meditation. BHAGAVAT is the narration of the sports of GOD.'

‘Oh, so it is not the compilation of imaginary stories!’.

‘Absolutely not. And Ved-Vyasji himself being the incarnation of God, his statements can well be taken as “**Verble Testimony**”. Is’nt it?’

‘I conceded.’

‘There is an amazing statement made by God Himself in Bhaagavat - “I was alone, when nothing existed. I have created this world. I shall remain, even when the world will vanish”.

‘Is it? It is same what you quoted from Upanishad - “One without second”. Amazing!’

‘Do you believe that Bhaagavat is yet another reliable Testimony?’

‘No dispute now?’

‘Yet another important fact!. Do you know that there are 24 incarnations of God described in Bhaagavat?’

‘Are you talking about VARAAH, NRUSINH VAAMAN, RAM, KRUSHNA etc.?’

Yes, but Bhaagavat says that “All these incarnations, except **KRUSHN**, were with the partial potentiality of God’s Power, but, KRUSHN is the GOD Himself with His Absolute Power”.

‘Is it? That means **KRUSHNA** means GOD only . Both words are synonymous!’

‘Exactly!’

‘It envisages that whom we call “**BHAGWAN**” is none other than **‘KRUSHNA!’**

‘I realise now’.

‘Let us now talk about GITA.’

‘I now followed what you want to say!’

‘What?’

‘That KRUSHNA being GOD, His statements in GITA are “Verble Testimony” too!’

‘Yes, you rightly said so!’

‘Now, I could follow that similar to Vedas, Brahm-Sutras, Bhagvad Gita and Bhagavat, are also statements of God and hence accepted as “Verble Testimony”. As such, they are believed to be TRUE. That is what you say?’

‘Exactly!’

‘But, why did you explained this **“Theory of Knowledge?”** My question was simple - **“WHO IS GOD?”**

‘I am trying to reply your question only. You want to know about God, is’nt it?’

‘Yes, that is what I am asking, and you instead, explained all the scriptures!’

‘Look, I already told you that God is very misterious phenomenon!. It is not like your mobile that you just see and identify it. **He** can be known as you understood your “Great Grandfather”.

‘Surprising! What is his connection here?’.

‘I mean, you can understand GOD by believing scriptures, as you could know your Great Grandfather by relying on the statements of your parents. By perception, it is not possible!’

‘Oh, that is why you elaborated about various scriptures?’

‘Exactly!. The scriptures have described God, THE REALITY, in many ways.’

But, it is a fact that as I have a father, my grand father too, must have his father! So, I can not doubt his existence. But for the existence of God! Yet it sounds unpalatable! Is there any stronger proof?’

5. “PROOF OF THE EXISTENCE OF GOD”

‘Do you know wherefrom “Butter” is produced?’
‘Why did you changed the topic? Everybody knows that Butter is produced by churning curd!’

‘And how the curd is prepared?’

‘From milk!, but what is its relavence with God?’

‘I am explaing. We know that since Butter is extracted from curd, made from milk, meaning there is Butter in milk. Isn’t it?’

‘Definitely!’

‘But, do you see Butter in milk?’

‘No’.

‘So can you say that Butter does not exist in milk?’

‘No, how can we say that!’

‘OK. See, what is this in my hand?’

‘That is seed of baniyan tree.’

‘Just break it and if you see a tree therein?’

‘No, how can there be in this tiny seed?’

‘But if you plant this seed in the field, a big tree will grow out of it, isn’t it?’

‘Yes’.

‘Means, a tree exists therein, but we don’t realise!’

‘True’

‘So, it is not true to say that it doesn’t exist therein!’

‘I agree.’

‘Do you know that an Owl cannot see in daylight. So It believes that the sun does not exist.’

‘Yes, I know.’

‘Is it not its foolishness?’

‘Correct’.

‘Likewise, if our scriptures says that God exists”, should we disbelieve them, since we are not in a position to see or experience Him? God says in Gita - **“Due to veil of Yogmaaya, I am not perceptible to everyone”**.

‘Now I understand that there is substance in your logic!’.

‘You just come to my house tomorrow, I shall show you some thing.’

‘O.k.’

‘Welcome, I was waiting for you only!’

‘Wonderful! Nicely decorated the house. Who was the designer?’

‘Oh, it just happened. We liked the house, and next day when we came, it was tiptop ready!. We didn’t do anything. It happened automatically!’

‘Why are you joking? You require an architect and interior decorater to accomplish the job!’

‘Do you know, some people say that this world came into existence accidentally! There was a big bang, and the whole universe was created!’

‘Who will believe it? There has to be a Creator!’

‘That is what I am trying to explain to you!’

‘Quite thoughtful!’

‘OK. Have you seen your wrist-watch from inside?’

‘Yes, once when it was being repaired by a repairer’

‘What is there inside?’

‘Many small wheels and tiny springs.’

‘Can you make similar watch yourself?’

‘What are you asking? It is a specialised job. Only expert designer can do it. It is not a joke to arrange such small parts and adjust exact timing!’

‘Then just think! if a small watch can not be created, without a brilliant maker, how come, such a magnificent mysterious world which has regular timely seasons, rising and setting of sun and moon, alternate rydhamic day and night, infinite plants, flowers with innumarable size, shape and colours, variety of birds and animals, and astonishing intricate arrangement of internal organs of human beings and different creatures, must have been created? Can it be without any Creator?. You may call Him by any name, but surely there is some **REALITY** who exists, who must be instrumental for this Creation, and to sustain it. Can you deny Him?:

‘Surely not. But the human mind is reluctant to

accept the fact unless one experiences by himself. Can you provide some more concrete proof?

‘OK. Tell me, have you climbed on Everest?’

‘Are you kidding? Is it that simple to climb on Everest? Only brave mountaineer like Tensing can do that.’

‘Then have you ever been on Moon?’

‘Do’nt make fun of me. Please reply my question, seriously. Only astronauts like Nil Armstrong can land there.’

‘OK. But surely, you must have fair knowledge of Mount Everest and also about Moon!’

‘Of course, I know a great deal about both of them!’

‘How come!, you said that you have’nt gone any of these places?’

‘Oh, you need not go there. I have read their descriptions in many books!’

‘You mean that you got the knowledge by reading the books about them! And you believe them to be true!’

‘Why not? They are written by the persons who had visited those places, from their own experience.’

‘Rightly you said. Exactly same way, our Purana, the statements made by our Saints and Seers, as well as Acharyas are also based on their personal experiences. Whatever they knew by direct experience or intuition, they have described in their granths, poetries and various literary works. They were the persons of high integrity having true moral values. They would never lie! They are trust worthy and reliable. As such, they can be treated as **‘Verble Testimony!’** Can we not keep faith

on them?’

‘Sure, what you say, seems correct!’

‘Look, it is the matter of faith to acquire the knowledge of any subject. You know that - the diameter of the earth is 8000 miles, but have you measured it yourself?, that - the light travels at the speed of 3 lac km. / second, have you conducted any experiment in that respect?, That - there are certain nos. of bone in our body, but you never counted them, yet know all these for certain!, Do you know how?. We rely on the write-ups of scientists, researchers who have known these facts by their personal knowledge. Isn't it? Similarly the facts about spirituality, God etc can be understood by trusting upon the write-ups, literary works, poetries etc. penned down by our Saints, Seers, Acharyas, Devotees etc., from their experiences. They are the “**Verbal Testimony**”.

‘Yes, I can understand’

‘As you recognised you great grandfather not by seeing him in person, but due to the faith in utterances of parents, same thing holds good in respect of God too.’

‘I agree.’

‘As not seeing the butter in milk, we can not deny it's existance ; it is foolishness for an Owl to disbelieve the existance of sun since it can not see it, exactly same way, our perception cannot be true always, and and we have to accept the existance of a **REALITY**, A Supreme Power behind the creation of such wonderful universe!

Do'nt you believe yet?

'Yes, I am fully convinced now. We can, likewise, accept the statements of our scriptures as "Verble Testimony" keeping faith therein. I agree in toto, but....'

6. "NECESSITY OF A GURU"

"BUT!" What do you mean? You just said that "I accept what you told!"

'It is the problem of every body like me. You said that all these explanations are available in the scriptures like **Ved - Gita** etc. Fine. But how a common man like me can understand the intricate and difficult statements contained therein?'

'I appreciate your difficulty. Leave aside the scriptures, we cannot understand the normal subjects like science, maths etc. ourselves!'

'Yes, that is why I am raising my doubt. How is it possible to acquire knowledge of scriptures?'

'When we require teachers and tutors to learn such ordinary subjects, to comprehend the meanings of scriptures is herculean task!'

'True. We require GURU, the Preacher, to understand the language of scriptures!'

'How should we find such Guru?'

'He should be a "**Divine Personality**", who should have deep knowledge and should have meditated upon the subjects. If we surrender to such a Guru whole heartedly, we can appreciate the real meaning by of the

scriptures by his grace.'

'Can you suggest some such Guru?'

'One Acharya, by name, **ShriVallabhacharyaji** was there sometime more than about 500 yers ago. Have you heard his name?'

'Yes, I have heard, but I do not know anything about him.'

'Have you heard about any other Acharya?'

'Yes, I have heard the name of one **Shankaracharyaji** also'.

'True. Shankaracharyaji, born in eighth century was very knowledgeable personality, who was well-versed with all the Indian scriptures viz., **Vedas, Gita, Brahmsutras** etc. He has written many granthas containing rich knowledge of those scriptures'.

'We hear the name of Shankaracharyaji in present days too, though he should not be living now!'

'Yes, that **Adi Shankaracharyaji** is not there, but his main disciple in his disciple-tradition is also known as "Shankaracharyaji".

'Oh then, who was **Vallabhacharyaji**?. His disciple?.

'No, there have been many Acharyas at different points of time.'

'Is it?, Who were they and when?'

'One **Ramanujacharyaji** appeared in eleventh century, another **Madhvacharyaji** in twelfth century, yet another **Nimbarkacharyaji** was born in thirteenth

century, and lastly in fifteenth century **Vallabhacharyaji** was born.'

'Does it mean that there have not been any Acharya thereafter?

'There have been many great learned personalities since then, but not of the calibre of those Acharyas.'

'Why are they called "**Acharya**"?'

'They all had thorough knowledge of the scriptures, who had great insight and had thought over them deeply. They had propounded their "own philosophical doctrines" independently. They had framed the principles therefrom, which they followed in their own life, and made their followers / disciples to adopt them in their lives. Hence called "**Acharya**".

'Oh! So they had many disciples and followers!'

'True, each of them are being followed by many disciples who have adopted the way of life prescribed by them for leading spiritual life for their sublimation and deliverance.'

'Whether the principles adopted by all those Acharyas same or different?'

'They are identical in some respect, but they differ too, on certain matters. Each one has put forth their own theories in respect of the nature of the **REALITY**, the phenomenal world, the status of Individual Being, the means of emancipation etc.;

'How do we then, distinguish their philosophies?'

'Their philosophies are known by different names. viz.,

Shankaracharyji's - "**Kevaladvait**" or "**Mayavad**", Ramanujacharya's - "**Visishtadvait**", Madhvacharya's - "**Dvait**", Nimbarkacharya's - "**Dvaitadvait**", and that of Vallabhacharya's is called "**Shuddhadvait**" or "**Akhand Brahmavad**".

7 . "WHOM SHOULD WE CHOOSE AS GURU?"

'Quite detailed information it is! So many different schools of philosophical thoughts do we have in India! Wonderful. But, rather this makes the issue more difficult as to "Whom should we choose Guru out of all of them, when they all are great scholars?'

'True. All these Acharyas were not ordinary persons. They were believed to be the incarnations of different Gods, who appeared on the earth for specific purposes. They were having Divine Power'.

'Out of them, Shankaracharyaji was well known, I think. Whose incarnation was he?'

'He was the incarnation of Lord Mahadevji. At that time, the people were illusioned by the 'The philosophy of nothingness' propagated by Buddha.'

'What about **Vallabhacharyaji**?'

'He is believed to be the incarnation of "**Bhagwan Krushna**".

'Oh , the choice is yet becoming more difficult, when they all were not only scholars, but the

incarnations of various deities!’

‘But do you recollect that we discussed about **“Bhaagvat as Praman”**?’

‘Yes I do. You had said that, it being “God’s own revelation” is a “Verble Testimony” which could be trusted.’

‘Then, you must also remember that it says that **“Various incarnations were of the partial manifestation of God, but Lord Krushna is the appearance of God Himself. As such He is Omnipotent”**’.

‘You mean it is same whether you call “Bhagvan” or “Krushna”’.

‘Exactly . Now suppose, one is the incarnation of God Himself, and another that of His fragment, whom will you choose?’

‘Naturally, onr who is the incarnation of Bhagavan SriKrusha’.

‘Do you know what is the benefit in your such choice?’

‘What are you pointing out?’

‘That, as the scriptures are the statements made by God Himself, as such, one who is His own incarnation can reveal the true meaning of the scriptures’.

‘I agree. You mean that one should choose **SriVallabhacharyaji** as Guru, right?’

‘Correctly you understood!’

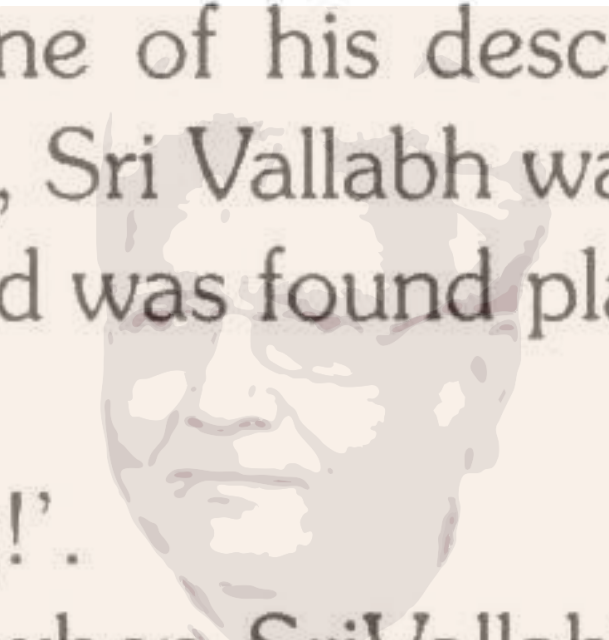
‘But, can you provide any proof of his being the

incarnation of God, as without that, it is quite difficult to accept these arguments!'

'If you read the biography of SriVallabhacharyaji, you will come across many incidences to corroborate the fact that he was the incarnation of God Himself!'

'Any specific incidence?'

When one of his ancestors **Yagnanarayan Bhat** performed an Yagna (sacrifice), God appeared from the fire, and granted him a boon that when one hundred "**Somyagna**" will be accomplished in his family, He would take birth as son of his descendant. As such, when Lakshman Bhatt, one of his descendants, completed 100th such sacrifice, Sri Vallabh was born as son to his wife Illammagaru and was found playing surrounded by fire.'

'Very surprising!'.

Not only that, when SriVallabhacharyaji departed from the earth, there was a column of bright flash raised in the river Ganga, and He had disappeared'.

'Amazing! but what is the significance of fire?'

'Fire signifies the mouth of God'.

'Please explain how'

'Have you seen any "Yagna" being performed?'

'Yes, wherein the brahmins pour various things like ghee etc. speaking the word "Svaahaa"!'

'True, do you know why?, Scriptures say that "Yagna kund" is the mouth of God. Whatever is being poured therein, are accepted by God as "offerings".

‘What do you mean?’

‘I mean, SriVallabhacharyaji too, is the incarnation of the “Mouth of Bhagvan SriKrushna”. That is the significance of fire!

‘Oh!’

‘There is yet another proof. SriVallabhacharyaji himself has said in the beginning of his one important granth “Subodhini” that “I am ordained by God Himself to unfold the true meaning of “Bhaagavat”, as His incarnation, in the form of human being like Ved-Vyas, as no body except **“Vaakpati”** and **“Vishvaanar”** is capable to do the job”. What more proof do you want?’

‘Wonderful!, but why did he said the words “Vakpati” and “Vaisvaanar”? What do they mean?’

‘He, being incarnation of God, like a husband of “speech”, i.e. Hymns of Veda, that is **“Vakpati”**, and the Divine Fire is called **“Vaisvaanar”**, which he symbolises!.’

‘There is yet another question. You said, SriVallabhacharyaji was incarnated five hundred years ago, then how one can make him guru now?. He would not be present now!’

‘Valid question!, But you acquire the knowledge of any subject from the books written by their experts. Isn’t it?’

‘True.’

‘After all, the purpose of accepting some body as Guru, is to acquire knowledge, to seek his guidance only!’

‘Yes, that is correct’.

‘As, we understand various “Lila” of God that were seen by Ved-Vyasji, by reading them in Bhaagvat, though Ved-Vyasji is not present personally at this moment, similarly, SriVallabhacharyaji is very much present in his literary works, which can be said as his **‘Indirect presence’**. His granthas are his “Literary Form” (Vaangmay svarup).’

8. “SHUDDHADVAIT PHILOSOPHY”

‘You said that SriVallabhacharyaji propounded **“Shuddhadvait Philosophy”**. What is that about?’

‘You are curious to know about God, the **REALITY**. You even do not know about yourself, you might be wanting to know about such a vast mysterious universe as to how has it come into existence, and all that we see around us. Isn't it? SriVallabhacharyaji has propounded his doctrine explaining in detail all such intrinsic phenomena of the universe, based on the testimony of scriptures. That is known as **“Shuddhadvait Philosophy.”**

‘Is there any “Granth” describing his philosophy?’

‘Yes. Though there are many, but one of his important work is known as **“Tattvarth Deep Nibandh”**, wherein he has elaborated all his philosophical aspects in detail.’

‘How do we know that it is based on various scriptures, and not his own beliefs with imaginations?’

‘True, but he himself has clarified in the beginning of that Granth that all his expainations therein, are based on four **“Varble Testimonies”** viz., **Vedas, Gita, Brahmsutraas,** and **Bhagavat.** He being godly person of high integrity, his assertion is trust worthy.’

‘Is that one composite Granth?.’

‘No, it contains three chapters’.

‘What are their specific names?.’

‘1. **Shaastraarth Prakaran** - based on Gita, 2. **Bhagavatarth Prakaran** - based on Bhagavat, and 3. **Sarv nirnay Prakaran** - based on all other sciptures like Vedas etc.’

‘That means, he has concidered all the scriptures to put forth his phiposophical viewpoints!’

‘Absolutely. Not only that, but his principles are not based on any single **“Pramaan”**, out of them, but he has considered “Unified meaning of all of them.”

‘You mean to say that there can not be any doubt, if one particular scripture does not convey the massage thereof clearly!’

‘Yes, that is why his philosophical views are well founded.’

‘Yes, I can understand’

‘What is the significance of the word **“Shuddhadvait”**?’

‘It has two words, namely **“Shuddha”** and

“Advait”. In sanskrut **“Dvait”** means **“Two”**. One means singular only, that, which are not two seperate identity, is called **“Advait”**.

‘But in what connection are we talking One and Two?.’

‘It is in respect of **“Brahman”** and **“Jagat”** (world)’.

‘But they are to different entities. **Brahman** means **Bhagvan**, you mean, no?. While we can see and experience Jagat, then, how can we compare both?’

‘That is exectly to be understood!’

‘Do you remember the statement of Upanishds **“One without second”**, i.e. “He is One only, nothing else exists.’

‘Yes, it is said in respect of **“Brahman”**, is’nt it?’

‘True. That is why Shankaraacharyaji interpretes that Brahman only is existant, as par this statement. So whatever we percieve as **“World”** does not exist at all. What we see is our illusion only due to our ignorance.’

‘How can that be? We see varios objects in the World!’

‘Shankaraacharyaji explains that since we do not know the real nature of **Brahman**, we falsely percieve Him as different objects. In fact, all what we see is nothing but Brahman only!.’ That is his philosophical doctrain, known as **“Kevaladvait vaad”**.

‘Then, how do we see these different things,if they do’nt exist?’

‘According to Shankaracharyji, there is an entity

called “**Maya**”, which is like a magician who can show the things which are not there. It creates an illusion!’

‘Very surprising!. But if we believe the statement of upanishad viz, “One without Second”, it sounds true, since there is only “**Brahman**” and nothing else. Is it that SriVallabhacharyaji does not accept this interpretation?, when he too admits the testimony of Veda-Upanishad etc?.

‘No, he does not believe that, though he accepts Veda etc as “Pramaan”!

‘Quite interesting!..’

‘Then, what is the belief of SriVallabhacharyaji regarding “**Jagat**” (World)?’

‘He asserts that The World is as “**REAL** as Brahman”

‘Means, he has totally opposit view from Shankaraacharyaji?’

‘Yes, but it is not his imagination or arbitrary view. His opiniun is based on the testimonies like Upanishads and Bhagavat’.

‘Is it so?, What “Pramaan” does he give?..’

‘Upanishad states - “**Sarvam khalu idam brahm**”, meaning, whatever we see around, called “**Jagat**”, is nothing but Brahman only’.

‘Does it mean that World is another form of Brahman?’.

‘Yes, why can’t that be possible?. You know that Brahman is “**Omnipresent**” and “**Omnipotent**”.

‘So what?..’

‘This Universe is vast and infinite. It supports the fact of Brahman being omnipresent. Besides, Upanishad reveals one more thing!.’

‘What is that?’

‘There is a statment - “**Ekoham bahu syaam prajaayey**”, meaning - Brahman was alone, and He thought to be many, and He acquired many forms with innumerable names.’

‘But how?.’

‘Merely by His **WILL**. He, being **Omnipotent**, can do whatever He desires.’

‘You mean that various objects are the forms of Brahman only!’

‘Ofcourse, whatever animated and unanimated objects that we see in the universe, are all forms acquired by **Brahman** only!’.

‘Wonderful!. Is there any proof of this phenominon in Bhaagavat?’.

‘Yes, there is. Bhagvan Himself has said - “**In the begining, I was alone when nothing existed. This world what you percieve is the form acquired by me. When every thing will dissolse, I shall remain**”.

‘But God is said to be a “**Divine Entity**”, whereas the objects in the universe are merely physical, devoid of any Divinity?.’

‘You know that peolple worship **Yamunaji** and **Gangaaji** as deity!’.

‘Yes they are considered to be **Godesses**’.

‘But people in fact, offer “Puja” to the rivers **Yamna** and **Ganga**! Is’nt it?.’

‘Yes that is true.’

‘It is because, These Godesses have both - Divine form called “**Adhidaivik Svarup**”, and also physical form viz., rivers, which are their “**Adhibhautik Svarup**”.

‘You mean, basically both are same?.’

‘Yes. Exactly Same way , **Bhagvan SriKrushna** is the Adkidaivik form of the “**REALITY**”, and “**The World**” is its Adhibhautik Form’.

‘Quite convincing!’

‘As such, SriVallabhacharyaji says that when Brahman has transformed Himself as “World”, it is naturally His “Adhibhautik” form. Thus, he says that there is “**NonDualism**” (Advait) between them.’

‘You mean, there is difference of their Aspects only, otherwise both are “**Non Different**” (Abhed).’

‘Exectly. For that reason only, SriVallabhacharyaji uses word “**Advait**”.

‘That is followed. But, he says “**Shuddhadvait**”. Why does he use prefix “**Shuddh**”?’

‘SriVallabhaacharyaji explains that inspite of being transformed into “**Jagat**”, Brahman remains immuted, that is, He remains unchanged in its nature, as, when an ornament is made out of a gold piece, inspite of its form

and name as well as use getting changed, the element of gold does not vanish. It still remains pure gold only. Besides, Brahman transforms Himself into the World by His own WILL and POWER, and still retains His “Brahmanhood.” Nothing like “Maya” etc. Is Instrumental for such transformation. Meaning the Non-duality or “Advait” relation between Brahman and Jagat is Pure “Shuddha”. Hence the name **“Shuddhadvait Vaad”**.

‘Oh!, now I can understand, how his “School of Thought” differentiate from “Kevaladvait vaad” of Shankaracharyaji!’

‘It is known as **“Brahmavaad”** also’.

‘What does that mean?’

‘According to Shankaracharyaji, the World is the creation of **“Maya”**, meaning, it is merely an illusion only, as such, his doctrine is also called as **“Mayavaad”**. ‘Is it?’

‘But, SriVallabhacharyaji asserts that the World is another aspect of Brahman only, meaning that whatever objects with different names that we see, are the forms acquired by Brahman only. That is, there is nothing but, Brahman only exists. They all are as Real as Brahman only. Hence, it is called **“Brahmavaad”**’.

‘Wonderful! Quite convincing!.

‘To make the point more clear, SriVallabhacharyaji has stated in **“Mangalaacharan”** of his “Nibandh granth” that **“Lord SriKrusha, who does wonders,**

is playing in the universe bearing various forms and names”.

‘Now the concept of “**Shuddhadvait**” is quite clear . Yet, there is a question!’

9. “**BRAHMA-PARAMAATMA-BHAGAVAN**”

‘Look, what we were discussing was - “**Who is Bhagavan?**”. Besides , there were referances of other names too, like **Brahman, Parmaatma** etc. Then who is **God** really out of them?. Are they the names of different deities?’

‘You are right. Anybody will get confused with these different names.’

‘So, please make this clear first.’

‘SriVallabhacharyaji himself has clarified this in the very begining of his granth “**Nibandh**”, as he is one such able Guru, who understands the difficulty of his disciples, as there are different names appearing in various scriptures.

‘What explanation has he given?.’

‘He has clarified that what is denoted by the word “**Brahman**” in “Srutis” i.e. Veda etc., One who is designated as “**Paramaatma**” in “Smrutis” like Gita, and the word “**Bhagavan**” is used in “Puranas” like Bhagavat all are ,in fact, the different words used for One **REALITY** only.’

‘Then, why these different names?’

‘They are the worlds used in different context’.

‘what context?’

“See, when do you call a man “Uncle”?”

‘One is addressed as “Uncle” with reference to his nephew’.

‘O K, who will call a lady as “Sister”?’

‘Her brother only.’

‘Means, all the women will not be addressed as “Sister”, i.e. a woman is Sister in relation to her Brother. Also, a man in relation to his Nephew, is called Uncle. Similarly, the REALITY, in different context is designated by different names.’

‘Please elaborate.’

‘When we believe the “Reality” as “**Omnipresent**”, It is called “**BRAHMAN**”, as the very meaning of that word is what is spreaded over or existing at all places at all time.’

‘Is it that, therefore, the word “**Brahman**” is used for the “**Reality**”?’

‘Yes. When the Reality becomes “**The Creator**”, “**The Controller**” or “**The Substratum**”, in those sense, It is “**Brahman**”. This name does not imply Its association with any particular one, but, indicates the connection with the entire Universe.’

‘Then, what about “**PARAMAATMA**”?’

‘When we call The Reality as “Paramaatma”, it reflects the specific relation with us. The word “Brahman”

indicates It to be without any form, whom we cannot perceive, or express. But the word "**Parmaatma**" conveys a definite meaning to It. It implies that we are "**Jivaatma**" and He is "**Param Atman**" i.e. "**Paramaatma**".

‘Yes, it sounds logical’

‘When there is some wrong doing on our part, we feel that we are being observed by "**Paramaatma**". Likewise, we perform good deeds to please "**Paramaata**", We experience His presence in our righteousness.’

‘True, we don’t get that feeling when we say "**Brahman**", what we experience calling "**Paramaatma**".

‘Exactly, that signifies the distinction between these two names!’

‘Wonderful!. Then, What about "**Bhagavan**"?’

‘By the word "**Paramaatma**" a relationship with all creatures - human beings is established but not with any individual, isn’t it?’

‘Yes, that is true.’

‘But when "**Parmaatma**" is incarnated as an "**Avtaar**", His relation with a devotee is established!’

‘How?’

‘You know that "**Parmaatma**" incarnated as "**Nrusinghji**" to save his devotee Pralhaad, when he had prayed to Him. Thus a personal relation was established between God and His devotee. Similarly,

when He incarnated as “**Ramchandraji**”, He established personal relations with all the inhabitants of Ayodhya as well as many devotees like **Shabari**. In that specific relations, He is called “**Bhagavan**”.

‘Does it mean that when Parmaatma is incarnated, He is called “**Bhagavan**”?’

‘Exactly. When a devotee worships Parmaatma as an individual, in his context, God is not only “Parmaatma”, but He is addressed as “**Bhagavan**”, like, a man is addressed as “**Uncle**” in context of his nephew.’

‘It sounds logical. If someone worships God, in that relation He is reckoned as “**Bhagvan**”. Right?’

‘Yet, there is another significance of the word “**Bhagavan**”! ‘.

‘What is that?’

‘The meaning of “**Bhag**” is “Attribute”, and One who is having the Attributes is called “**Bhagavan**”. When God is incarnated on the earth, He has six “**Divine Attributes**”.

‘Which are they?’

‘They are **Aishvary**, **Virya**, **Yash**, **Sri**, **Gyaan** and **Vairaagya**.’

‘Now the significance of these different names is quite clear ‘.

‘SriVallabhacharyaji has therefore, used these words namely “**Brahman**” in Shastrarth Prakaran,

“**Parmaatma**” in Sarvanirnay Prakaran, and “**Bhagavan**” in Bhagavataarth Prakaran of his important granth “**Nibandh**” to emphasis their meaning.’

‘But, ultimately all these words stand for the **REALITY** only, is’nt it?’

‘You understood clearly!’

10. “ULTIMATE REALITY - SRIKRUSHNA”

‘Yet there is one more question, You refered the name of **KRUSHN** quite often, who is He out of these three names?’

‘Nice question. You have now followed the significance of the word “**Bhagavan**”, is’nt it? Bhagavat asserts that “**Krushn Himself is Bhagavan**”.

‘So you mean that _ as there is one of the incarnations as “**Krushn**”, He is “**Bhagavan**”?’

‘Not like that. Krushn is not incarnation, like **Vaaman, Nrusingh, Buddha** etc. He is ONE who is incarnated in all those forms’.

‘Oh, so **Krushn** is The “**Ultimate Reality**”?’

‘Exactly!. **Krushn** Himself is called **Brahman - Paramaatma- Bhagavan**’.

‘That is, these words are used as His adjectives, is it?’

‘Quite True!’ He is “**Parbrahm Parmaatma Bhagvan Krushn**”.

‘Can you substantiate this by any Testimony?’

‘SriKrushn says in Gita that, **“In veda, One who is described is none other than Me only”!**’

‘That means that - Krushn is not any “demi God”?’

‘Yes. The word **“Krushna”** signifies ‘The **Reality**’.

‘How can you say that?’

‘Look, “Krushna” is two letter word. **“Krush”** and **“Na”**. is ‘nt it!. First letter means **“Sat”** i.e. **“Existance”**, and another means **“Anand”** i.e. **“Bliss”**. Both together signifies One who is Existent and Blissful, i.e. **“Sadaanand”**. That is the characteristic of “Ultimate Reality”.

‘Does that mean that **“Paramaatma”** Himself has preached Arjun in Gita?’

‘Quite True’.

‘We find innumerable statemenrs to substaintiate that “Lord SriKrushn” Himself is The Highest Reality, i.e. Parabrahm Parmaatma!.

‘Will you please show such statements from the scriptures?’

‘Brahmaaji, the Lord of Creation says in **“Brahm Samhitaa”** that Krushna is the Origin, Puraan Purush, The Principal Controller, The Cause of all causes of Universe’.

‘Whether **Mahadevji** too endorses such views?’

‘Yes, Shivaji says in **“Padma Puraan”** that Krushn is the One to whom, worship of all gods lead to. Both these Deities are the Principals responsible for

creaton and distruction.'

'Any testimony from "**Bhagavat**"?'

'Oh, Bhagavat states very clearly "**Krushnstu Bhagavan svayam**", i.e. Krushn Himself is God. All demi gods viz., Naarad, Brahmaa, Varun etc. pray to Krushn only. Samaved, Upanishads sing His glory only. Yogis, Gyaanis meditate upon Him. Both Indra and Brshmaa have confessed during "Govardhan lila" and "Moh lila" respectively narrated in Bhagavat, that "Krushna is Parabrahm".

'What about Gita?'

'Therein, Krushn says "**I am One, known as PURUSHOTTAM in the world and described in Veda**".

'Is it?'

'Arjun addresses Krushn as Parabrahm, most pious, Param Purush, Original God, One who is Unborn etc.'

'How has Krushn reciprocated?'

'HE advises Arjun - "**Concentrate your mind in Me, Worship Me, Surrender to Me alone and a I shall liberate you**", etc. HE asserts that "**There is no body equal to or above Me**". Who other than "**Parmaatma**" can utter such words?'

'Absolutely. So all the scriptures affirm in one voice that "Krushn is Ultimate Reality".'

'Is there any doubt left now?'

'Now it is quite clear that "**Lord SriKrushn**" is the

“Ultimate Reality”. But, We normally address various deities as “Bhagavan SriRam”, “Bhagvan Buddh” etc. Are they also not “Bhagavan”? What is the distinction between them and SriKrushn?.

‘Similar question was asked to SriVallabhacharyaji by the uncle of one of his disciple Gajaadhardas. He had asked that all Gods are equal, then, why do you give importance to “SriKrushn” only?’

‘What explanation did he give then?’

‘He had clarified that the rulers of each state are called king of that state, yet there is an “Emporer” under whose control all the Kings have to function.’

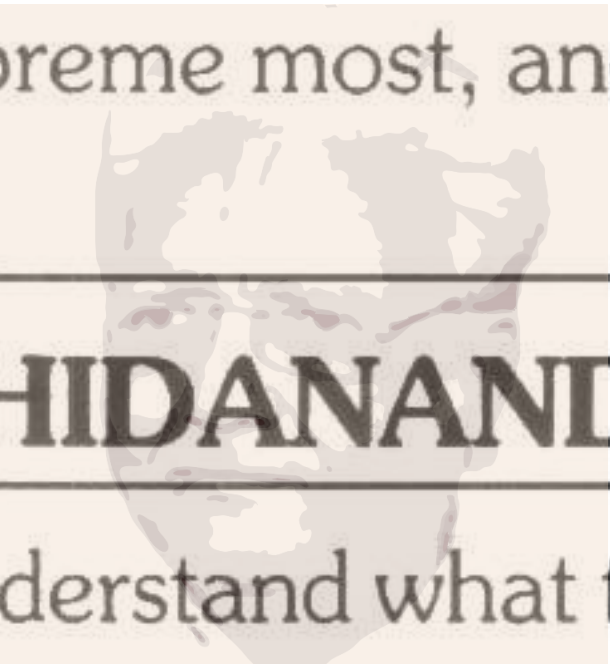
‘As there was an Emporer ruling in Delhi who was the Ruler of the entire country. It is like that?’

‘Yes. Those Rulers of their respective states were called “King”, and the Ruler of the entire country was also “King”, yet there is difference between them!. Because that of whole country is superior and all others are under his control’

‘So, there is distinction between the two?’

‘True. Exactly the same way, **“SriKrushn”** is Supreme One, who is “All Powerful” i.e. Omnipotent equipped with six divine attributes., whereas , all the demi gods are HIS incarnations having limited powers required to exercise the function of particular incarnation.’

‘Is it like various ministers holding different portfolios with limited powers whereas the prime

minister has supreme power?'.


‘Yes, we can understand that way. Three chief deities namely **Brahma - Vishnu - Mahesh** equipped with three qualities viz., **Rajas, Satv, Tamas** respectively, are the controllers of **Creation, Sustainance** and **Destruction** in order. But Lord SriKrushn is The Supreme one’.

‘Whether various Goddesses too have limited powers?’

‘Exectly!. **Lakshmiji** is the goddess of wealth, likewise, **Sarasvati** devi is goddess of knowledge. etc.’

‘Wonderful. Now the concept is quite clear. Lord SriKrushn is the Supreme most, and all other deities are his incarnations.’

11. “SACHCHIDANAND BRAHMAN”

‘I could now understand what the REALITY is, but, what is its nature?.

‘Sruti says - “**Satyam Jnanam Anantam Brahm**”, as well as “**Satyam Vigyanam Anandam Brahm**”, meaning Brahman is “**Sachchidanand**”, i.e. it has three elements viz., “**Sat**”- Existance, “**Chit**” - Consciousness, and “**Anand**” - Bliss.’

‘Does it mean that these three are primordial elements?.

‘True. SriVallabhaacharyaji explains that Brahman is, besides Sachchidanand, **Omnipresent, Omnipotent** and **Omniscient**. His contents never get

exhausted. He is independant and devoid of attributes of the matter (Prakruti).'

'Why does he call Him "Omnipresent" and Independant?'

'Because Brahman is not bound by the limitaations of "**Space** and **Time**". Its magnitude is always constant. It never diminishes. As such, He is called "**Avinaashi**".

'Why is He "Omnipotent" and "Omniscient"'

'HE has unlimited powers of both Work and Knowledge. He has freedom to be anything. He can be an object of worship, and keeps control over every thing'. One who is Independant can only have that potentiality.'

'Do you mean that inspite of being attributeless, He reveals Himself before devotees as "**Bhagavan**" acquiring divine attributes?'

'That is what was explained regarding the distinction between names "**Brahman**" and "**Bhagavan**"!'

'Whether there are any other attributes in "**Brahman**"?'

'Oh, HE is treasure of various attributes'.

'SriVallabhaacharyaji explains that Brahman is substratum of this entire universe. HE keeps His power "**Maya**" under His control. He is the superiormost and embodiment of "**Bliss**". He is distinct from the attributes of matter.'

'Can you quote any scripture to substantiate this

statement?’

‘In Gita, Lord Krushn Himself states that **“Maya”** is under His control. He is the Supreme One!’

‘Whether Bhagavat also endorses this?’

‘Bhagavat describes innumerable attributes of Bhagavan - like **Truth, Pious, Merciful, Detachment**, etc.’

‘How do you suggest that He has form too?’

‘It is the element of **“Bliss”** which imparts Him the form. Sruti rather says that **“He is nothing but Bliss only.”**

‘Wonderful!’.

‘Upanishad describes Him as **“Ras”** (emotion), and that is **“Bliss”**.’

‘But when you call Brahman as **“Omnipresent”**, how can there be a Form?. Is it not that He is said to be **“Formless”**?.’

‘You now accept **“Krushn”** as **“Parbrahman”**, is ‘nt it?’

‘There is no doubt about it!.’

‘SriVallabhaacharyaji explains that **“Krushn”** is the solidified form of “Bliss” existing in Omnipresent Brahman’.

‘You mean that **“Krushn”** is the Form of **“Brahman”** only?’

‘Exectly. That is why he describes **“Krushn”**, saying that He is one who contains nothing but **“Bliss”**

in His entire body, may it be His hands, legs, mouth or belly etc.'

'Means Krushn is full of Bliss only!'

'It is, as such, that his stories even gives divine bliss and happiness to one who listens them'.

Is it that, for this reason, SriVallabhacharyaji advocates to worship **Lord Krushn** only?'

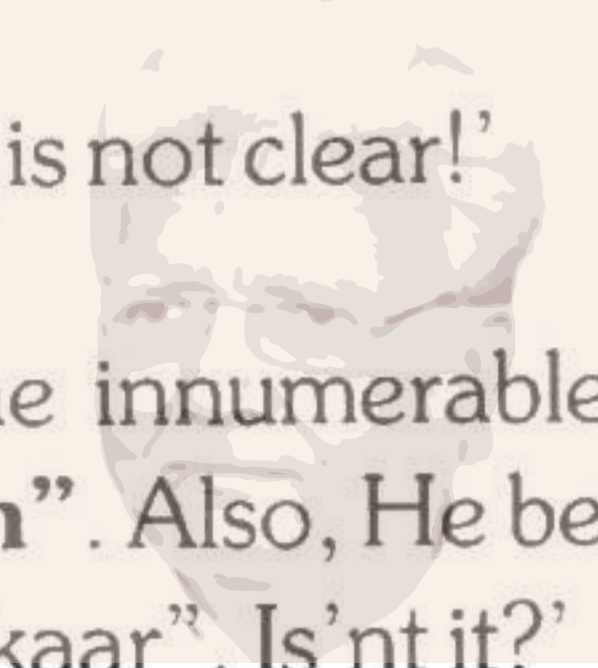
'It is quite natural that if one wants to experience "**Divine Bliss**", one should remain connected to its abundant source viz., Krushn.'

'Yes the importance of "Krushn - bhakti" is now quite clear!.

'Yet, one thing is not clear!'

'What is that?'

'Because of the innumerable attributes, you said, Brahman is "**Sagun**". Also, He being Blissful, Brahman as "Krushna" is "Sakaar". Is'nt it?'

'That is what I have explained!'.

'Then why is it that some believe Brahman to be "**Nirgun-Nirakaar**" (Attributeless as well as Formless)?'.

'You are right. Shankaracharyaji considers Brahman as "**Nirgun- Niraakar**".

'But why such contradiction?. He too, accepts Ved - Gita etc as "**Verble Testimonies**"!.'

'There are two types of statemenents in "**Sruties**". Some describe Brahman as "**Nirgun-Nirakaar**", whereas others call "**Sagun-Sakaar**".

'Oh, is it?'

‘Sankaracharyji considered distinction between Sruties into two catagories, viz., **“Nirgun Sruties”** and **“Sagun Sruties”**.

‘What is the purpose?.’

He explains that former which describes Him as **“Nirgun-Nirakaar”**, is “Absolute One”, for whom he uses word **“Parbrahma”**, and the later, describing Him as **“Sagun-Sakaar”**, is **“Aparbrahma”**, who is Subordinate, who is described so for the purpose of **“worship”** only.’

‘Oh, so according to him, **“Real Brahman”** is “Nirgun-Nirakaar” whom he addresses as “Parbrahm”!’

‘True.’

‘But this explanation sounds logical. As **“Sagun-Nirgun”**, and **“Sakaar-Nirakaar”** are opposite words to each other. How can both be true?’.

‘SriVallabhaacharyaji has given convincing explanation. He says that Srutis describe Brahman as **“Omnipotent”**, meaning He is capable of becoming anything as par His Wish. Nothing should be impossible for Him!.’

‘I accept.’

‘As such, we find many contradictory statements viz., **“HE holds though HE does not have hands”**. **“HE runs, inspite of not having feet”**. **“HE is the smaller than an atom, yet biggest amongst everything.”** etc. This can be possible only for

Brahman being **Divine**, and **omnipotent**.'

'This too sounds logical.'

'He explains further that when we consider Veda as "Verble Testimony", we have to accept all its statements to be "**True**". One can not interpret veda in the way one likes as per one's own intellect, or accept some statements and leave others.!'

'True, but then, whether Brahman is "**Sagun**" or "**Nirgun**"?

'SriVallabhaacharyaji explains that Brahman is "**VIRUDDH DHARMAASRAYI**", meaning HE is substratum of opposite attributes. It is the significant characteristic of Brahman.'

'Wonderful!'

'Elaborating further, he says that since Brahman is devoid of the qualities like "**Satva-Rajas-Tamas**" of Prakruti, in that sense, **He** is "**Nirgun**", but because He has many Divine Attributes like "**Aishvary**" etc., HE is said to be "**Sagun**".

'Yes now the significance of "**Viruddha dharmaasray**" is clear. But whether Brahman has any connection with the "**World**"?.

'We knew what the "**Brahman**" is. But if we know His function too, you will find the answer. In fact, "**Sachchidanand Brahman**" is the "**Creator**" of the World'. Not only that, He is its **Sustainer** and **Destroyer** too.'

‘Any scriptural testimony?’

‘As sruti defines Brahman as **“Sachchidanand”**, upanishad states His function, i.e. **“One from whom these creatures are born, stay wherein and get dissolved therein is Brahman”**’.

‘Means Sruti introduces Brahman by His work too!’

‘SriVallabhaacharyaji explains quoting **“Scriptural Authority”** only’.

‘But, it is said that **“Brahmaaji”** is the creator of the World!. Then question arises **“Who created Brahmaa**, when there was none except Brahman?’

‘Brahman Himself has taken the forms of three Gods - **Brahmaa, Vishnu, Mahesh**, who are equipped with three attributes - **Rajas, Satva, Tamas**, and are responsible for **Creation, Sustainance and Destruction** respectively.’

‘But what is the source of **“Prakruti”** and its three attributes?’

‘When Brahman created the World, HIS inharrent elements **Sat, Chit, Anand** got transformed as **Satva, Rajas and Tamas** respectively.’

12. “PHILOSOPHICAL PRINCIPLES”

‘I accept all your explanation up till now, but I am not yet convinced that when nothing existed as you said **“One without Second”** where from Brahman created the **“World”**?’

‘It is a nice question. First we should know the **“Process of Creation”**.’

‘Please explain its modality’.

‘Do you know out of what a pot is created?’

‘It is made out of clay.’

‘Who makes pot?’.

‘A potter’.

‘How does he make it?’.

‘Using his implements viz., a wheel and a stick’.

‘It means that you require **clay, a potter** and **his implements**, is’nt it?’

‘True’.

‘Philosophically, “clay” is called **“Material or Inherent Cause”**, and “the potter”, as well as his “implements”, both are called **“Efficient Cause”**. And the pot is called **“Effect”**’.

‘You mean that the material out of which a pot is created and its instrumentalities i.e. one who creates and the means by which, it is created are called **“Cause”** and one what is created is called **“Effect”**?’

‘Correct. Exactly the same way, the Creator as well as the Substance, out of which the **“World”** is created, both are **“God (Brahman)”**, i.e. He is both the **“Material Cause”** as well as **“Efficient Cause”**’.

‘Oh, it means, The World is **“EFFECT”** like pot, and Brahman is **“MATERIAL CAUSE”** as well as **“EFFICIENT CAUSE”** like clay and potter?’

‘True. As such, The Brahman is both the **“Material and Efficient Causes”**. But, in the case of Pot, both of them are different viz., one is Clay and other is Potter. Whereas, in case of “The World”, both are **“Brahman”** only. As such **“Brahman is called “Abhinn Nimittopadan Kaaran”** (Non different material-efficient cause) of The World. And **“The World is the Effect of Brahman”**.

‘You mean The World is created by Brahman out of Himself?.’

‘Is that clear now?’.

‘Please elaborate littel more!’

‘Let us take an another example. When oilseed is crushed, it turns into oil. Is’nt it?’

‘So you are saying that oilseed is **“Material Cause”** and oil is The **“Effect”**’.

‘True. But do you know that oil is produced from oilseed, because oil is already present in the oilseed. That means the **“Effect”** pre-exists in the **“Cause”**. No oil can be produced by crushing sand, as it has no such poteantiality.’

‘Yes I can understand.’

‘As such, when the **“Cause”** has potentiality to creat **“Effect”** out if it, it is called **“Inherent Cause”**’.

‘Similarly, Brahman is **“Inherent Cause”** of the “World”. Because, the World pre-exists in Brahman. ‘Naturally.’

‘It is called the principle of **“Satkaaryvaad”**,

which is used by 'SriVallabhacharyaji to explain various philosophical phenomina.'

'Quite clear now.'

'There is yet another important related principle!'

'What is that?'

'It is the principle of "**Immutable Transformation**".

'What does it signify?'

'When the milk is converted into yogurt, it cannot be brought back as milk, is'nt it?

'Yes, but why is it so?'

'Because the properties of the milk change, hence it is called "**Mutable Transformation**", (vikrut parinam) and as such, it is irrevercible change.

'But when the ornament is made from a piece of gold, the gold very much remains present in the ornament, though the name and form gets changed.'

True'

'It is because the essence of gold remains in the ornaments. As such, we can convert ornaments back as a piece of gold. It is called "**Immutable Transformation**". This is a revercible change.'

'Understood'.

'Exactly same way, when Brahman acquires the form of the World, He, remains very much therein. And as such, when the World gets dissoved, Brahman in His original form is always there.'

'Therefore, the World is called "**Immutable Transformation of Brahman**".

‘Wonderful’.

‘Yet there is one more principle which should be understood’.

‘Which principle?’.

‘Some people believe that when we do not see any thing, if not manifested, it is “Non-Existent”. Until a thing is produced, it does not exist.’

‘Explain with an example please’.

‘Until a tree grows from a seed, tree is said to be **“Non Existent”**. Being is an **“Existent”** and not non-being is **“Non-Existent”**’.

‘The view-point of SriVallabhacharyaji is different in this respect. He believes that when a thing is produced out of something, it is called **“Manifestation”**’.

‘Why does he believe so?’.

‘Because, according to the principle of **“Satkaaryavad”**, when something is produced as an **“Effect”**, it must be pre-existing in the **“Cause”**. Nothing can be produced if it does not already exist. Similarly, when we do not perceive a thing, it does not mean that it is destroyed. There is only **“Concealment”**’.

‘Sounds quite logical!’.

‘SriVallabhacharyaji explains that **“Avirbhav”** (manifestation) and **“Tirobhav”** (concealment) are the powers of God, which HE uses as per His wish. When He wishes to appear or be visible, He is manifested, and likewise, when He does not wish to be seen, He conceals

him self.'

'It means to appear or to disappear dependes on God's wish!.'

'Absolutely. HE plays the game of **Creation** and **Distruction**, by this process, i.e. by manifestation or concealment.'

How do you say that?'

'In fact The World already exists in Brahman. When HE wishes to create it, He manifestes it externally. Again when He intends to wind up His "Lila" He dissolve it within Himdself, i.e. He conceals it.'

'Oh, wonderful. Quite clear now.'

13. "AKSHARBRAHM"

'How is the world created?.'

'We now know that Brahman is both "**Material Cause**" as well as "**Efficient Cause**", i.e. He Himself has created the World out of Himself'.

'True, but how?.'

'Braahman was alone in the beginning'.

'Yes, you had said - "One without second"!'

'But one can not enjoy oneself alone'.

'Naturally!.'

'So He desired "Others". He thought to be many and He became many.'

'How do you say this?.'

'I am not saying. These are statements of Upanishads'.

‘O.K.’

‘When He desired to creat Universe, He, by deminishing His Delight a bit, out of His “Sachchidanand” form, acquired an “Omnipresent Form, called **“Aksharbrahm”**’.

‘You mean, “Aksharbrahma” is His another “Aspect”?’

‘Yes, that is the Cause of all causes. That is also **“Sachchidanand”**, having three elements - viz., **Existance, Consciousness** and **Bliss**.’

‘Then, what is difference between **“Parbrahm”** and **“Aksharbrahm”**?.’

‘As there is disiction betweena Rose flower and its fragarence, which is Rose’s attribute, likewise, Aksharbrahma is **“Dharm”** (attribute) of Parbrahm, called **“Dharmi”** (one containing attribute).’

‘O.K.’

‘It is also **“Dhaam”** (abode) of Parbrahm.’

‘You mean Aksharbrahm is both, the **Attribute of Parbrahm** as well as His **Abode**?.’

‘Yes, but, as the fragrance spreaded around is not as much as that of Rose itself The content of Bliss in. Aksharbrahm appears limited, though It is Sachchidanand only!.

‘As such, SriVallabhacharyji states in ‘Krushnaasray Stotra’ that “SriHari is Purnaananad (infinite bliss), while Aksharbrahm is Ganitaanand”

(finite bliss).

‘What is the significance of “**Aksharbrahm**”?’

‘SriVallabhacharyaji explains in “**Nibandh**” that when Lord desired to manifest as animated and inanimated objects, He acquired two forms viz., “Prakruti” and “Purush”, out of His “Sat” (existant) and “Chit” (consciousness) elements. That is known as “Aksharbrahm”.

‘What is the significance of Prakruti and Purush?’

‘Bhagavat explains that before many eras, The Reality, which is beyond the reach of mind and speech, subdivided Himself as “Purush” out of His power of Knowledge and as “Prakruti” out of His power of Work. It is that described in gita as “Akshar”.

‘You mean that Prakruti and Purush are two aspects of “Aksharbrahm”.

‘Exactly. What is described as “Nirgun -Nirakaar” by “Nirgun Sruties” is that of “Aksharbrahm”.

‘Is it then, what Shamkaraacharyaji denots by “Parbrahm”, is infact “Aksharbrahm”?’

‘True. That is the ultimate destination of “Gyaanis” and “Yogins”.

‘Then is “Purushottam” something different?’

‘Quite true. Lord SriKrushn, therefore says in gita that “I am beyond this “Kshar” (perishabl) and better than “Akshar”, and known as “Purushottam” in lok and veda”.

‘Oh, now the distinction between Purushottam and

Aksharbrahm is clear. Former is with infinite Delight, whereas the later one is having limited Delight.'

'As such, SriVallabhacharyaji calls Purushottam as "Adhidaivik" aspect of Brahman who is "Sagun -Sakar" and Aksharbrahm as His "Adhyaatmik" aspect, which is "Nirgun-Nirakaar".'

"Then , can we say that Srikrushn is "Sakaar" aspect of Aksharbrahm?'

'Yes, that is what SriVallabhacharyaji explains in siddhant muktaavali granth -" SriKrushn is parbrahm, and Aksharbrahm is Sachchidaatmak", K stands to indicate that it is with finite Bliss, not infinite.

14. "PRAKRUTI-PURUSH-KAAL KARMA-SVABHAV"

'The nature of "Aksharbrahm is clear. Can it be said to be the sub-stratum of the Universe?'

'Yes, "Akshar" has two aspects - "Prakruti" and "Purush".'

'But, how God has created this entire Universe?'

'If we want to build a house, we require some raw materials like sand, bricks, cement etc. Is'nt it?'

'True'.

'Likewise, God has transformed Himself into certain forms, by which this whole World is created'.

'What are those forms? How have they come into Being?'

‘SriVallabhaacharyaji has explained in his “Nibandh” garnth that when God desired to do certain work, He activates His particular aspect. As such, out of His “Aksharbrahm” aspect , which is the foot of Purshottam as base, four forms are evolved, namely 1. **Akshar**, 2. **Kaal**, 3. **Karma**, and 4. **Svabhav**.

‘Then, what are “**Prakruti**” and “**Purush**”?’

‘They both are evolutes of “**Akshar**”. Thus, in fact, God has created the World out of five primordial forms - viz., **Prakruti**, **Purush**, **Kaal**, **Karma**, **Svabhav**.’

‘What exactly “**Prakruti**” is?.’

‘We find many inanimate objects in the Universe, which are the products of “**SAT**” element of “**Sachchidanand**” Brahman (God). They are the products of “**Prakruti**” (matter) form of God.

‘And , What is “**Purush**” form”?’

‘Innumerable Animate objejects known as “Jivaatman” are produced from “CHIT” element of aBrahman. They collectively are the “Purush” form of God, which is nothing but consciousness.’

‘What is the significance of “**Kaal**”?’

‘“Kaal” called “**Chestaa**” or an act to be instrumantal, of God. It is due to “Kaal”, there is prominence of His “**Power of Action**” (kriya shakti). It is instrumental for Creation and Destruction. There exists “**Aishvarya**” of God in Kaal.’

‘Which of the elements of “**Sachchidanad**” exists

in Kaal?’

‘Except the Omnipotent Maya, Kaal has all other power of God, and as such, Kaal is said to be the Supreme Authority of God. ‘SriVallabhaacharyaji explains that there is concealment of “**Chidamsh**” and non-manifestation of “**Anandaamsh**”, but “**Sadansh**” manifest partially’.

‘How does Kaal functions?’

‘It acts as a “**Controller**”. It is always in motion. As such we experience it terms of time viz., **Year, month, days hours** etc.’

‘Does it reveal eually to everybody?’

‘No. ‘SriVallabhaacharyaji explains that because of partial manifestation of “**Sadamsh**”, in practice, we experience it, but can not see it. To those, who neglect God, get destroyed by it, but those who worship Him, they experience His Grace.’

‘So, it can be said that”Kaal” plays pivoted roll in the Creation of srushti!’

‘Off course’.

“How does God transform into “Karma”? | .

‘SriVallabhaacharyaji explains that Action of an individual according to advice or injection of the scriptures, is one of the specific form or transformation of “**Aksharbrahm**”, called “**Karma**”.

‘Does it mean that “Karma” is manifested like “Kaal”?’.

‘No, there is a difference. “Kaal” gets manifested by

itself, but “Karma” appears when some Action is performed by a person either in accordance with or against what is prescribed in scriptures.’

‘Does “Karma” exist permanently like “Kaal”?’

‘No, “Karma” culminates due to Action, and it subsists until one receives its consequential result’

‘That means “Karma” exists so long as its reward is not obtained?’

‘True’.

‘Whether the power of “Karma” is different in every individual?’

‘“Karma” being an extra-ordinary form of God, it, in fact, exists universally, but it manifests in every individual according to the Action performed by him’.

‘It means, “Karma” vanishes once its reward is fulfilled, right?’

‘Yes, it is the power of God, which gets concealed partially, after giving its reward.’

‘Which element of Sachchidanand is contained in “Karma”?’

‘There exists “Sadamsh” partially, but both “Chidamsh” and “Anandamsh” of God remains concealed in “Karma”.

‘Whether there is bondage due to Karma for every individual?’

‘Yes those who are affected due to “Kaal”, one’s Karma controls him’.

‘That means God manifests in the world as both **Kaal** and **Karma**!’

‘Absolutely true’.

‘Then, what is the significance of “SVABHAVA”, which we normally call “Nature”?.’

‘We can see specific Nature (behavior) of every living being, or even inanimate objects, which we call their Properties. That is known as their “Svabhava”.’

‘Can you give some example?’.

‘Look, milk transforms into yogurt, but not oil, a pot is created out of mud, but you can not make cloth out of it. A swan is always white, peacock is multi coloured, like that Each object has different taste. All these variations of Nature in both animated and inanimate objects are due to **“Wishes of God”**.

‘Quite true, it seems. Do you mean that “Svabhav” has no content of the body of God viz., Sat, Chit and Anand like “Kaal and Karam!”’

‘Yes, SriVallabhaacharyaji explains that at the time of creation only, God desired to have distinct Nature in each one of them, which we designate as “Svabhav”. As such, it is also His specific Form which exists in everybody, living or nonliving.’

‘Yes, I understand!’.

‘He further explains that there is no other reason for such variation of “Svabhav”, and as such, God’s presence is felt in universe as “Svabhava” too.’

‘That means, like “Kaal” and “Karma”, God is manifested as “Svabhav” also in the World!’.

‘Very convincing’.

15. “ORIGINATION OF WORLD AND ITS NATURE”

‘With this discussions it is understood that God, by His Own Wish, has transformed Himself, out of His Adhyaatmik aspect “**Aksharbrahm**”, into five forms, namely, ‘**Prakruti, Purush, Kaal, Karm, Svabhav**’, i.e. **Matter, Conscious-Being, Time, Energy, Nature**. Is‘nt it?’

‘True. Nothing else exists except these five forms (ingredients) in the Universe. As such, Sri Vallabhacharyaji states that the “World” is “**Adhibhautik Aspect**” of Brahman.’

‘But, please explain as to how innumerable different objects, both animated and inanimated, whose body, nature, functions etc. are multi-dimentional, have come into existence?’

‘Kapil muni has explained this phenomina to his mother Devhuti in third canto of Bhagavat. SriVallabhacharyaji too has elaborated in “**Sarvanirnay**” chapter of his “**Nibandh**” granth, where he states that the “World” is originated out of communion of “**Prakruti**” and “**Purush**” forms of God.’

‘How that union is brought about?’

‘We knew that “**Kaal**” is the “**Power of Action**” of God and works as an Instrument. As such, “Kaal” is

instrumental to bring about Union of **“Prakruti”** and **“Purush”**.’

‘Oh, so it is the function of **“Kaal”**!.’

‘Prakruti has three attributes viz. **Satva, Rajah** and **Tamah**, in balanced condition. But, under influence of **“Kaal”**, they become imbalanced, and results into a novel element called **“Mahat”**.’

‘What is the significance of **“Mahat”**?’

‘**“Mahat”**, in primary aspect is **“Adhidaivik”**, its **“Adhyatmik”** aspect is the body of Brahman, and its **“Adhibautik”** aspect is what we call **“Chitta”**. Cronologically, other elements, which act as “Cause” of the “World”, are produced.’

‘Which other elements are produced from **“Mahat”**?’

‘The first evolute of **“Mahat”** is **“Ahamkaar”**, which are of three types, viz., **Satvik, Rajasik** and **Tamasik**. They, in turn produces other elements.’

‘Which are they?’

‘**“Man”** (mind) as well as the Deities of Directions (Dishaa) are evolved from **“Satvik Ahankaar”**. Also Sun, Moon etc. are evolved out of it.’

‘What are evolved from **“Rajasik Ahankaar”**?’

‘Ten Senses, Five Cognitive (**Gyaanendriya**) and Five Conative (**Karmendriy**) are evolved out of it.’

‘Which elements are produced from **“Tamasik Ahamkaar”**?’

‘Five fundamental elements viz., **Pruthvi** (Earth), **Jal** (Water), **Tej** (Fire), **Vaayu** (Air), and **Aakaash** (Ether); as well as five “**Tanmaatras**” viz., **Rup** (Form), **Ras** (Taste), **Gandh** (Smell), **Shabd** (Speech) and **Sparsh** (Touch) are the products of “Taamsik Ahamkaar”.

‘Are these elements are “**Material Cause**” of the World as “**Effect**”?’.

Yes, as such, SriVallabhacharyaji specify all these 28 elements as primary ones out of which the World is created’.

‘Please innumerate these fundamental elements’.

‘1. **Prakruti**, 2. **Purush**, 3. **Mahat**, 4. **Ahamkaar**, 5. **Man**, 6 - 10. **Five Karmendriya**, 10 - 15. **Five Gyaanendriya.**, 16 - 20. **Five Tanmaatras**, 21 - 25. **Five Mahabhuts** , 26 - 28. **Three Attributes - Satva, Rajh, Tamah.**

‘That means all these elements have gone into the creation of theWorld!’

‘Yes, they being Cause of Creation, SriVallabhacharyaji designate them collectively as “**Karan Brahm**”.

‘Why “Prakruti” etc.are termed as “Elements”?.’

‘SriVallabhacharyaji explains that these forms existed prior to the origination of the the “**Brahmaand**”, an egg like creation As such, they are the “Cause” to create the World as “Effect”.

‘What is the significance of “Brahmaand”?’

‘As an egg is evolved from a bird which eventually gives birth to a child-bird, but it does not come out of egg immediately, there is some process that takes place prior to child birth. Similarly, prior to the World came into existence, an egg -like **“Brahmaand”** was formed’.

‘Means basically, these elements are evolved out of **“Sachchidanabd Brahman”** only. Then why do these elements are called **“Causes”**?’.

‘It is because, various inanimated objects that we see in the Universe did not came into existence in one stroke, but there is a cronological process of **“Cause and Effect”**, before final objects came into being.’

‘Will you please elaborate?’.

‘Look, a shirt is not made directly from the cotton. First threads as “Effect” are made out of cotton as “Cause”. In turn, a piece of cloth is woven from thread. Here, thread is “Cause” and cloth is “Effect”. Again shirt is stiched out of cloth, where shirt and cloth are “Cause” and “Effect” respectively. Similarly, there is a cronological process which takes place from “Prakruti” as **“Cause”**, before a final object appear as **“Effect”** in the World.’

‘As such, all inanimated objects are the evolution of **“Sat-Amsh”** of God’

‘Then, how are the animated Individual- Beings are evovled?’

‘They, called **“Jivaatma”**, have emerged from

“**Cit-amsh**” of God, and their relationship with God is of “**Amsh-Amshi**”, i.e. that of a Part to Whole.’

‘Quite clear.’

‘Thus all Inanimated objects, as well as Body, Senses, Vital, Mind, Intellect, Chitt, Ego, and the attributes **Satva, Rajas, Tamas**, in Individual Beings, all are created from “**Prakruti**” form of “**Sadamsh**”, and the “**Consciousness**” therein, have come from “**Purush**” transformed from “**Chidamsh**” of Aksharbrahm.’.

‘That means, the World containing animated and inanimated objects is actually created from “**Sachchidanand Brahman**”!’.

‘Yes, and hence, SriVallabhacharyaji explains in Nibandh, that “**The World is the Effect (Kaary) of God, and God is its Cause.**”

‘Then whether other “**Schools of Thought**” have different views?’.

‘Yes, **Samkhya Darshan** believes that “**Prakruti**” and “**Purush**” are the primordial Causes for Creation. **Nyaay-Vaisheshik Darshans** considers different Atoms as the Cause. **Mimamsaa Darshan** explains that the World has come into existance to enable the Individual Being to receive the rewards of their Deeds. Whereas, **Shamkaracharyaji**, the propounder of “Advait Vedant”, believes that, the World is the creation of “**Maya**”, and as such, it is an illusion

only, it does not exist in reality at all!.'

'Oh, there are so many views in this respects!,
Surprising!'

'Yes, but, SriVallabhacharyaji, on the authorities of various "**Bhagavad-Shastras**", emphathically asserts that The World has been evolved out of God, and God is the "**Creator**" too. As such, The World is "Adhibhautic Aspect", i.e. another Form of God".

16. "JIVAATMA - SOUL"

'What is "Jivaatm" or what we call "Soul"?'

'That is the "Conscious Being" existing in all the living creatures. It is called "**Jiva**" or "**Atma**" also.'

'Does that mean that "**Jivaatma**" is the real nature of an "**Individual Being**"?'

'Exactly.'

'How has "**Jivaatma**" originated?'

'Jivaatma is the **part** (Amsh) of God. It is seperated from Brahman.'

'Will you please elaborate?'

'SriVallabhacharyaji explains, based on Upanishads that as sparks come out of a burning coal, similarly when Brahman desired to be many, His inherant elements viz., **Sat** (Existance), **Chit** (Consciousness), and **Anand** (Bliss) got seperated from His "**Aksharbrahm Aspect**". It is out of these parts (Amsh), inanimated objects are formed, wherein "**Sadamsh**" remain

manifested and **“Chidamsh”** as well as **“Anandamsh”** elements got concealed, similarly innumerable Individual Beings (animated objects) came into existence, wherein **“Sadamsh”** and **“Chidamsh”** are manifested and **“Anandaash”** got concealed.’

‘You mean that in every individual creature, **“Jivaatma”** dwells which offers consciousness to it?’

‘True. That is the very nature of every Individual Being. i.e. in reality, every Individual is **“Atma”**, the part of Brahman’.

‘Yes, I understood.’

‘Now recollect my question in the beginning - **“Who are you?”**

‘Oh, now I realise that I am **“Atma”**. Gopal is the name given to identify my body’.

‘So, you got the answer?’

‘Yes, after a long journey. But, I learnt a lot.’

‘Any further question?’

‘Oh, many clarifications yet required!’

‘You may ask.’

‘If **“Jivaatma”** is the divine part of **“Sachchidaanand Bhagavan”**, why does one experience pains and miseries?’

‘Nice question! When Jivaatma gets separated as a part from God, at that very moment, he has all the three divine elements of Sachchidaanand, viz., **Sat, Chit**, and **Anand**. As such, he is said to be in **“Pure state”**.’

‘Then, why does he not remain in that state permanently?’

‘On separation from Brahman, Jiva comes in contact with God’s power called “**Avidya**”, due to which the “**Bliss**” (Anand) element gets concealed. He loses all pristine attributes like “**Aishvary, Virya**” etc.’

‘What is “**Avidya**”?’

‘That we will discuss later, but it has negative influence on Jivaatma.’

‘What sort of negativity?’

‘In the absence or “**Aishvary**”, Jiva becomes dependant and helpless, the veiling of “**Virya**” renders him to suffer all miseries, in absence “**Yash**”, he remains in wants, not having “**Sri**” makes him poor, on losing “**Gyaan**” he develops ego and identifies himself as body etc. acquires false knowledge, and on concealment of “**Vairaagy**” he gets attached to worldly objects. Due to this, Jivaatma falls into “**Bonded State**”.

‘Oh, understood now’. Is that the reason for the cycle of births and deaths.?’

‘Yes. Jivaata has to take birth in various “**Yonies**” to avail of rewards of his actions, whether good or bad!.He gets trapped!’

‘Whether “**Jivaatma**” is subject to birth and death?’

‘No, as God exist for ever, i.e., He is “**Nitya**”, “**Jivaatma**” too, being His part, is **Nitya**. It means that there is neither origination nor destruction of

Jivaatma. Lord SriKrushn says in Gita that, '**Atma is not born or dies, It enters new body , discarding old one, similar to a man removing old cloth, and wears new one.**' Birth and Death are characteristics of body.'

'Then, what are the characteristics of **Jivaatma**?'
'SriVallabhacharyaji explains that Jivaatma being the part of God, he is "**Knower, Doer and Enjoyer**" too. Its main characteristic is **Consciousness** or **Knowledge**. Also by virtue of the "**Amsh-Amshi**" (part to the whole) relation, Jivaatm has inherited both as Doer and Enjoyer.'

'Some people proclaim themshelves as "**Brahman**" saying "**Aham Brahmaasmi**". Can any body become Brahman?'

'Interesting question!. Samkarachaaryaji believes that both "**Atma**" and "**Paramatma**" are identical. He does not call "Jiva" as Amsh (part), but considers as **Vibhu** (Whole). As such, his slogan is - "**Brahm satya, Jagat mithya, jiva is nothing but Brahman**".

'But, he must have some proof for his such notion! What testimony does he give?'

'There is a dialogue in Chhandogy Upanishad, where father tells his son Svetketu - "**Tattvamasi**" meaning "**Thou art that**", (you are Brahman). But, SriVallabhacharyaji clarifies that this is the part of the sentence (declaration). The full sentence envisages that

“Both the world and Individual Being are Brahmaatmak”, i.e. where Brahman is essentially involved”.

‘You mean they have an identity with Brahman, but not Brahman Himself?’

‘Exectly. Since innumerable **“Jivas”** are seperated from Brahman, His **“Sadamsh”** and **“Chidamsh”** are manifested while **“Anandaamsh”** is concealed in them.’

‘Well, now there is clear grasp of Nature of Jivaatm.’

17. “ANTARYAAMI”

‘What does it mean when we say **“God dwells in everybody”**. Does it indicate **“Jivaatma”**?’

‘No. As **“Sadamsh”** and **“Chidamsh”** are seperated from **“Aksharbrahm”** which forms innumerable Inanimated and animated objects, similarlily, His **“Anansaamsh”** too are seperated, which are called **“Antaryaami”**, The Inner-Beings.’

‘Whether **“Antaryaami”** too dwells within every Individual-Being?’

‘Yes. At the time of Creation, along with Jivaatmaa, God’s divine amsh (part) i.e. **“Antaryami”** too enters into every body.’

‘What is the function of **“Antaryaami”**?’

‘Anyaryaami acts as **Controller of Jivaatma**. It dwells

with Jivaatma witnessing all its acts. It is called “**Vyashti Antaryaami**”.

‘Whether there is any explanation in Upanisjads in this regard?’

‘Yes. There is a metaphor in Upanishad which narrates that - “**Two birds are sitting side by side on a branch of tree. One of them enjoys the fruits of tree, and other, just witnesses its acts**”. Here, one which enjoys fruits symbolises “**Jivaatma**”, and witness is “**Antaryaami**”.

‘How does God control this entire Universe?’

‘HE controls the world as “**Samashti Antaryaami**”, who is designated by various names viz., “**Viraat Purush**”, “**Naarayan**”, “**Paramaatma**” etc.’

‘But, it is said that Tridevs - **Brahmaa, Vishnu, Shiv** are the Controllers!’

‘True. They are manifested from “**Samashti Antaryaami**”, A form taken by Lord SriKrushn only. They are called “**Gunavataar**”, representing three attributes of Prakruti, viz., **Rajas, Satva, Tamas**, and execute the functions of **Creation, Sustainance** and **Destruction** respectively.’

‘Oh, that means, God controls every Individual-Being as “**Vyasti-Antaryaami**” and the entire Universe as “**Samashti Antaryaami**”!. Wonderful!

18. “AVIDYA - VIDYA SHAKTI”

‘Do you remember my first question? **“Who are you?”**.’

‘Yes, and my reply was - **“I am Gopal”**. Now I understand that **“Gopal”** is the name given to my body!’

‘Means, you thought that **“You are your body”**. Right?’

‘Yes, but that was my mistake, I realise now’.

‘Do you know that why did you made that mistake?’.

‘No, why exactly?’.

‘That is due to **“Avidya”**. It is a power of God.’

‘Yes, you had said that **“When Jivaatma got seperated from God, it came in contact with Avidya, due to which it is subjected to sufferings”**.’

‘True. SriVallabhacharyaji explains that there are two powers - **“Vidya”** and **“Avidya”** created by “Maya Shakti” of God, which operates the activities of the World’

‘Are these different powers of God?’.

‘Yes, Bhagavat has narrated 12 such powers viz., **Sri, Pushti, Giraa, Kaanti, Kirti, Tushti, Ilaa, Urjaa, Vidya, Avidya, Maya**. God operates through these powers for different purposes.’

‘What is the functions of **“Avidya”**?’

“Avidya” causes Jivaatma five fold “**Adhyaas**” (Illusions) ‘

“What does that imply?”

‘It is a false understanding by which Jivaatma identifies Himself as a **Body**, or **Senses** or **Vital** or **Antahkarann** (inner senses), and eventually forgets that in reality He is the Amsh (part) of God’ (Svarup Vismruti).

‘Oh, that is the real cause of mistaken identity!’

‘They are called **Dehadhyas**, **Indriyadhyas**, **Pranaadhyas**, Antahkars nadhyas and Svarup Vusmruti. That is the reason of Bondage resulting into a cycle of Birth and Death.’

‘What is the effect of “**Avidya**” on jivaatma?’

‘**Satva**, **Rajas** and **Tamas** are the attributes of Prakruti. “Avidya” is the product of “Rajas and Tamas” attributes.

‘Please elaborate it further’.

‘We have seen earlier that the first evolute from Prakruti is “**Mahat**”. “**Ahankar**” is produced from it thereafter.’

‘Yes, that is true.’

“Mahat” is what we call “**Chitta**”. Both Chitta and Ahankaar are collectively called “**Antahkaran**”. As such, Jivaatma identifies himself with Antahkaran. This gives rise to “**Antahakaranaadhyas**” in first place. “**Praan** (Vital) is the transformation of Antahkaran. As such, “**Praanaadhyas**” develops. Thereafter **Senses**

are developed from “Rajas Ahamkaar” and **Panch Mahaabhut** from “Tamas Ahamkaar” which eventually develop “**Indriyaadhyaas**” and “**Dehaasadyaas**” respectively.

‘Whether “**Svarup Vismruti**” is the ultimate result of these four “Adhyaas”?’

‘Execty. We forget our real identity. We say - “**I am fat or thin**” These parameters are of our body, and not of our Atma, what we really are!. That is due to “**Dehaadhyaas**”.’

‘Oh!, then similarly we say “**I am blind, or deaf** due to “**Indriyaadhaas**”?’.

‘True. In fact we are not really “**our senses**”. In the same way, **feeling hungry or satisfied** is due to “**Praanaadhyaas**”. When we say that “**I understand**”, or “**I am happy, sad etc.**”, that is virtue of our intellect, but due to “**Antahkaranaadhyaas**” we say so.’

‘That means due to such wrong notions, we all the while live in illusions only!’

‘Yes, that is the cause of our bondage!’

‘What is the significance of “Bondage”?’.

‘SriVallabhacharyaji explains that due to ignorance of “**Self**”, Jivaatma is sequentially influenenced by **Antahakaranaadhyas** to **Dehadhas**, and forgates his true identity and starts believing himself to be his **Body, Senses**, etc. He repeats his illusion as **Body** to **Senses**

to **Vitsls** to **Antahkaran**. This creates a whirlpool in worldly-well (**bhavkup**). As such, Jivaatma gets trapped therein. That is the state of “**Bondage**”. That is the cause of pains and sufferings of Jivaatma.’

‘But Gita says that there is neither birth or death of Jivaatam, he being the “**Chidamsh**” of God. Then why should he experience birth and death?’

‘Quite true. Jivaatma neither is originated nor destroyed. But we experience birth and death by virtue of acquiring a body. Again body is formed out of “five basic elements (Panch mahaabbhuts), which are the product of “**Sadamsh**” of God, and which are produced and gets destroyed. As such, we can not say that body gets birth and dies either!’

‘Then, what is the phenomenon called “Birth and Death”?’

‘God explains in Gita - “As a man removes his old clothes and wears new ones, similarly Jivaatma leaves old body and enters into another one.” (2/22). As such, this transition is called Death and taking new Birth. However Jivaatma experience birth and death due to his false identity as body etc. due to Avidya.

‘Oh, It is just an illusion!,’

‘Exactly.’

‘Can Jivaatma get free from Bondage?’

‘Yes, if Avidya, which is the cause of Bondage is removed, Jivaatma can be liberated’.

‘How can Avidya be removed?’

‘SriVallabhacharyaji explains that similar to Avidya there is “**Vidya**” shakti also, which removes the illusions (Adhyaas) of Jivaatma, so that he can be librated’.

‘What is “**Vidya Shakti**”?.’

‘Like Avidya, “Vidya” too is five fold, i.e. it has five divisions.’

‘What are they?’

‘They are **Vairaagya**, **Samkhya**, **Yoga**, **Tapas**, and **Bhakti** (Devotion)’.

‘What is meant by “**Vairaagya**”?.’

‘When there is sense of detachment in the worldly objects, one is not attracted towards home, family, wealth etc., it is called “Vairaagya”.

‘Then what is “**Saamkhya**”?.’

‘Due to Vairsagya, one can distinguish between permaent objects (viz. Atma) and temporary objects like body etc. which are destroyed eventually. At that stage, one can easily leave such objects which do not last perpetually. Such awareness is called “Samkhya”.’

‘What is meant by term “**Yoga**”?.

‘Once a devotee leaves perishable objects, he has to adopt eight steps viz., **Yam**, **Niyam**, **Asan**, **Praanayam**, **Pratyaahar**, **Dhyaan**, **Dhaarana**, culminating into **Samaathi** is called “**Yoga**”. Its simple meaning is to unite with God.’

‘What does “**Tapas**” signify?’

‘Considering the worldly events as God’s play (lila), to consider pleasure and pains, friends and foes, praise

and abuse equally, i.e. without getting disturbed, and to remain calm in all situations is called "Tapas".

'How to define "**Bhakti**"?'

'Knowing the relationship with God as "**Part to Whole**", to love God utmost, being fully aware of His Greatness and Glory, is called "**Bhakti**". Devotion aiming salvation is called "**Maryaada - Bhakti**", while selfless devotion to please God only, is called "Pushti Bhakti".

'Weather these "**Panchparva Vidya**" liberate the soul?.'

'Yes, when the "Adhyaas" (illusions) gets destroyed by "Vidya", one is said to be delivered i.e. acquired "Moksh". But SriVallabhacharyaji explains that by removal of Avidya, one's body, senses, antahkaran are not destroyed, but he gets out of the cycle of birth and death.'

'Does it mean that, then, he does not identify himself as body, senses etc.?''

'True. As the body etc. are formed from "**Sadamsh**" of God, they are not destroyed. Only his false understading to identify himself with body etc. vanishes. Such liberated soul looses his identity, but others recognise him as particular person.'

'Surprising!'

'Such a state is called "**Jivan mukti**". One is libareted in one's life itself.'

'Means life continues inspite of getting liberated?'

‘Yes, one survives untill the rewards of one’s Actions (Karma). are fully accomplished.’

‘When does one fully liberated.’

‘After one finally leaves his body. It is called **“Videhmukti”**.

‘Where does Jivaatma goes after **being** delivered finally.’

‘That rests upon God to give him perpatual place depending upon the qualification of Jivaatma.’

‘Now it is clear that **“Avidya - Vidya”** shaktis play an important role in the Play of Universe. By Avidya, one gets bonded and liberated by Vidya.’

‘Thus God enjoys the Sport with the instrumentality of **Avidya** and **Vidya**.’

19. “MAYA”

‘We hear the word **“Maya”** quite often. What does it signify?.’

‘Maya’ is one of the powers of God amongst His twelve powers, by which He executes all His activities of the world.’

‘Is that an independant entity?’

‘No. Power is always integrally associated with its possessor and operates as per will of its Master’

‘Whether **“Maya”** is instrumental in process of Creation?’.

‘Yes. **“Maya”** is **“Omnipotency”** (sarvabhavan saamarthya) of God’.

‘What is its significance?’

‘It implies that God can do whatever He wishes, or woud’nt do if He does’nt want, or He can do each and every thing. That is - “Nothing is impossible for Him”.

‘But people use the word Maya as an illusion!’

‘Yes, Maya has yet another form called **“Vyamohika Maya”**.

‘What is its function?’

‘It implies ignorance or illusion. It operates in two ways.’

‘What are they?’

‘One of its function is to act as **“Veil”** so that one would not identify the real nature of the object. And another function is to disguise and show some different object, as done by magician, by which one would get puzzled’.

‘How does “Vyamohika Maya” operates?’

‘It covers the intellect first by ignorance. Then it creates illusionary objects in one’s intellect, similar to what exist in reality, by which there is an illusion in the mind of a person, who believes the same to be real. One can not descriminate between the real and fack’.

‘Will you please explain with any example?’

‘As you know that a child can not dishtinguish between good and bad. Suppose he is shown a good thing and you tell him that ‘it is bad’, he will believe it. With that impression, whenever you show a good thing, he would say, it is bad, because of illusion created in his mind’.

‘Quite true. So Vyamohika Maya creates illusionary

effect and misguides you’.

‘Exectly!’.

‘What is “**Yog Maya**”?’

‘The power of God which is instrumental for the creation of the world is designated as “**Yog Maya**” by SriVallabhacharyaji.’

‘You mean that God has created this Universe through “Yog Maya”?’.

‘Yes. ‘SriVallabhacharyaji asserts that the world is the “**Effect**” of God as “**Cause**”, where Maya acts as a tool of God.’

‘Shankaracharyaji too believes that the world is created by Maya!’

‘But there is a difference. He belives Maya as an inexplicable phenominon, i.e. neither “**real** nor **unreal**.” As such, it is a power of delusion and acts like s magician. He explains that though Sruti says that “**There is nothing but Brahman only**”, yet Maya shows variety of things. That is an illusion. As such, the world is “Mithya” (non existent), according to him.’

‘What about the various Individual Souls (Jivaatma) as per his belief?’

‘That is again an illusion, he asserts. In fact there is no distinction between **Atma** and **Parmaatma**. Both are one only. We see so many individuals only because of our ignorance due to Maya, - Shankaracharyaji says’.

‘Oh, that is, there is nothing like world. As such, he advocates to leave the material objects and take

“Sanyaas”.

‘Yes, he advises that through scriptures once you know the real nature of Brahman, you shall identify everything with Him. The world will vanish.’

‘That is, there is quite contradiction is his opinion!’.
‘But, based on the Verble Testimonies of Veda, Gita, Brahmsutraas and Bhagavat, SriVallabhacharyaji asserts that though Maya is instrumental for world creation, it does not act independently, it is under control of God, and as such, the real Cause is God, and not Maya. All its aspects like Vidya, Avidya, helps in the Divine Sport of God.’

‘Yes, it is quite clear now.’

20. “SAMSAAR”

‘It is clearly understood now that why does Jivaatma experience pleasure and pain in this “Samsaar”?.’

‘In this “**World**”, not in this “**Samsaar**”!’

‘That is one and same thing.’

‘No. Both are not same. They are different. The “World”, being an aspect of Brahman (Brahmaatmak), is Real, while “**Samsaar**” is Unreal (mithya).’

‘Why is it so?’

‘The world is transformed as “Naam-Roop-Karm” (Name-Form-Action) by and out of Brahman, manifesting His “**Sat amsh**”, where his “**Chit amsh**” and “**Anand amsh**” are concealed’. As such, it is Real.’

‘Then what is “Samsaar”?’.

‘It is a false - imaginary creation in the intellect of jivaatma under the influence of Maya, due to his “**Ahanta** and **Mamata**”, i.e. I-ness and My-ness, which is called “Samsaar”.’

‘What are “**Ahanta** and **Mamata**”?’

“**Ahanta**” means sense of “I-ness”, ego and “**Mamata**” means sense of “My-ness”, possessiveness. They are created due to false understanding because of “**Avidya**” (adhyas). As such, SriVallabhacharyaji calls it “**mithya**”, i.e. unreal, whereas the World is real.’

‘Oh, so can we say that “Samsaar” is “Effect” of Avidya as “Cause”?’.

‘Absolutely. The words nescience, illusion, unreal are used in respect of “Samsaar” and not “World” since it is an aspect of God’.

‘Then can we say that Samsaar dissolves too, as Avidya vanishes due to Vidya?’

‘Yes, as explained earlier, bondage is caused due to Avidya, and by Vidya, there is deliverance. Samsaar also vanishes on getting liberated. But the World remains, as it is created by God.’

‘This settles a great misunderstanding!.’

‘The misunderstanding to consider The World and Samsaar identical is due to believing The World as illusion by “**Mayavaadins**”. (Those who subscribe to “Maya” as an instrument of the creation of the World.)

‘Exactly’.

21. “VISHAY AND. VISHAYATAA”

‘How do we acquire knowledge of an object?’

‘When our senses interact with any object, then we recognise it as it exists. We can identify whether it is round or square, smooth or rough, red or yellow etc. As we experience them, they are called “**Vishay**” (Objective objectivity).’

‘You mean we can experience it as **Real**!’

‘Yes, that is the “Real knowledge” of an object, because the object is “Real” as it is the form of “**Sadamsh**” of God. We percieve various objects like pot, table, fan etc.’

‘Can there be “**Unreal**” objects also?.’

‘Yes, as we know, “**Vyaamohika maya**” of God can creat an illusionary object also. That will give false knowledge of the object.’

‘How does it appear?’.

‘Like a magician, Maya creates imaginary objects in our intellect, similar to the real objects. It is called “**Vishayataa**” (subjective objectivity).

‘You mean, “Vishayataa” is Unreal?’

‘Yes, it creates an illusion. One experiences fales vision, insted of real and starts believing to be true.’

‘Will you please give some example?.’

‘When you are travelling in a train and look outside, though the train is running, but you feel that the trees are running fast in opposite direction. That is simply an

illusionary effect. Similarly, instead of real object (vishay), you get disillusioned by “vishayata” - subjective objectivity.’

‘So this implies that **“Vishay”** is truth, **“Vishayataa”** is false.’

‘Exactly. That is why ‘SriVallabhacharyaji advises to stick to “Vishay” and leave “Vishsyata”, because “Vishayata” is detrimental not “Vishay”.’

22. “PURPOSE OF CREATION

‘What is the purpose of Creating the World??’.

‘Both Upanishad and Bhagavat says that there was nothing except God before the creation of the World, which we discussed earlier.’

‘Yes, you had said there was **“One without second”**.’

‘True. God was alone. Sruti sayas - **“He could not play alone”**. One can not enjoy if he is alone. So God desired another.’.

‘But God being “Sachchidanand”, is embodiment of Bliss. Himself!’

‘Very true. But you need some one to enjoy your own bliss. God is **“Omnipotent”** He can do whatever He may wish. As such, He created out of His **Sat** and **Cit** elements, innumerable inanimated objects. and Conscious Beings.’.

‘You mean, God created the World for enjoying His own Bliss!’.

“Yes. SriVallabhacharyaji says in Anubhashya, his important granth, that there is no specific purpose of Creation. This is similar to - when a king kills an animal during hunting, it is not to eat its meat, but simply for pleasure.’.

‘Can you give any other example?’.

‘He says - “It is like a play being enacted by village children”. There is no purpose but to enjoy, It is just sport. Similarly, the Creation is the Sport of God called His “**Lila**”.

‘Oh, so God has to exert Himself for such Play!.’

‘No, there is no exertion, as God possesses “Kriya shakti” as well as “Jyan shakti” by which God does whatever he desires. He Himself is both Action and Knowledge. As such He can do whatever He may wish. “Lila” is the overflow of Anand without any efforts.’.

‘Why God created so many varieties of both animated and inanimated objects?’.

‘It is because you require **variations** and **pecularity** for enjoyment, as we find in a circus’

‘Yes, I understood’

23. “TYPES Of INDIVIDUAL SOULS”

‘It is understood that God has created variety of Individual Souls (Jivatma) for the sake of His enjoyment, but, since all Jivaatmas are the parts (Chidamsh) of Sachchidaanand Brahman, they should be alike. But in

reality Each Jivatma has different nature (svabhav). How do you explain it?.'

'We have seen earlier that God has transformed Himself as "**Svabhaav**", like "**Kaal**" and "**Karm**". All Inanimated objects are created from "**Sadamsh**" each with different properties. Likewise, all Individual Beings are formed from "**Chidamsh**" of God each with distinct nature (Svabhaav) as per His Wishes. As such in Gita, God asserts that He has created two types of srusti viz., "**Daivi Srushti**" and "**Asuri Srushti**".'

"What are differences between two?'

'God has implanted attitude of righteousness in "Daivi Srushti", which makes them to think about their sublimation. As such, by the grace of God, they get salvation by adopting Devotion as means.'

'What about "Asuri Srushti"?'

'Contrary to that, Asuri Srushti contains various evils and bad attitude, which make them to suffer and therefore they are moving continuously in the cycles of birth and death.'

'You mean there are only two categories of jivaatam?.'

'SriVallabhacharyaji has made various classification of Jivaatma. He has divided "Daivi srushti" in two categories viz., "**Pushti Jivas**" and "**Maryaada Jivas**". He designates "Asuri srushti" as "**Pravahi Jivas**".'

'Means , there are three varieties - 1. **Pushti**, 2.

Maryaada, and 3. **Pravahi!**'.

'No, there are combinations of these three varieties also, depending upon the quotient of characteristics of each categories viz., **Pushti-Maryaada**, **Pushti-Pravahi**, **Maryaada-Pravahi** etc. He classifies Pravahi srushti into to sub-categories - 1. **Durgya** and 2. **Agya**.

'How are the Individual Souls distinguished?'

'SriVallabhacharyaji has explained that "Pushti-jivas" are emerged from the body of God. They are more inclined to serve God with utter devotion and eventually realise Him and partake in His divine sports (lila).'

'Whether all Pushti-jivas alike?.'

'No, SriVallabhacharyaji subdivides them into four categories viz., -

1. **"Shuddh Pushti"**- They are rarest jivas who are blessed to realise God by His Divine Grace. They have pure love for and strongly attached to God.

2. **"Pushti Pushti"**.- They, having knowledge of glory and greatness of God, have utter love for God with top priority. They serve God with full devotion.

3. **"Maryada Pushti"** - They are more inclined towards listening and singing glory of God with full devotion.

4. **"Pravaahi Pushti"** - They are less inclined to personal worship, rather more interested in His external services and devotion.

'What are the characteristics of **"Maryada Jivas"**'?'

‘They are emerged from speech of God. As such, they are interested in persuits of **Dharma**, **Artha** and **Kaama**, by adopting the prescriptions of scriptures and attain salvation (**Moksh**).’

‘And what about “**Pravahi Jivas**”?’.

‘God has produced them from His mind. They have worldly orientation and not

interested in worship or devotion. They continue to undergo cycles of birth and death. They

acquire fruits at the mercy of God. They are the one designated as “Asuri srushti” in Gita’.

24. “**BONDAGE and LIBERATION**”

‘What is “**Bondage**”?’.

‘To get trapped into the cycle of births and deaths is called “Bondage”. It is because of the Bondage that Jivaatma is subjected to sufferings and miseres’.

‘What is the cause of Bondage?’.

‘Bondage is caused due to “**Avidya maaya**”, due to which Jivatama harbours wrong notions, called “**Adhyaas**”, and forgets his real nature that he is a part of, and detached from God. In fact, there is nothig like birth and death of Jivaatma. He acquires various bodies to enjoy the fruits of his actions (karma) of his past births. As such, he experiences pleasure and pains. That state is called “Bondage”.

‘Whether Jivaatma can get liberated from the cycle of births and deathes?’.

‘Yes, once he becomes aware of his real nature, he can acquire **“Liberation”**’.

‘What do we know by the term **“Moksh”**?’.

‘Moksh’ is defined in many ways. Some believe that to get away from sufferings and acquire happiness is Moksh. Others believe that the real understanding of the nature of the Soul or merger of Atma into Paramatma is Moksh.’

‘What is the viewpoint of SriVallabhacharyaji?.’

‘According to him, Realizing God is Moksh. It is a state when the Jivatma can relish the Divine Sports (**lila**) of God.’

‘Are there many types of “Liberation”?’

‘Yes. By performing selfless actions (nishkaam karm) one experiences Divine Bliss of Soul. Also By accomplishing vedik duties, along with the true knowledge of Brahman, one relishes **“Brahmaanand”** These are the forms of Liberation’.

‘Whether by worshiping various Deitis, one can be liberated?’.

‘Yes, by worshiping selflessly various Gods named in Vedas like **Agni, Varun** etc. as well as those described in Purans viz., **Shiv, Durga, Ganapati** etc. one can please them and eventually realise them in various ways, called - **Salokya, Samipya, Sarshti, Sarupya, Sayujy Mukti.**’

‘Please explain their significance.’

“Salokya” means to get abode in particular Deity,

“**Samipya**” indicates Gods nearness, “**Saarshti**” means to acquire His **glory**, “**Sarupya**” stands for getting Deity’s resemblance and “**Sayujya**” signifies merger within a Deity.’

Whether one can get Liberation by the systems like “**Saamhkyia**” and “**Yoga**” also?’

‘Yes, without worshipping any God, one can get salvation through other systems also.’

‘Like, by “**Action**” (Karma), i.e. by performing various sacrifices (Yajna) prescribed in Vedas. One can also be liberated by acquiring “**Knowledge**” (gyaan) about Brahman.’

‘Yes, by comprehending true nature of Brahman, through various scriptures, one can identify oneself with Brahman, and experiences “**Brahmaanand**”, since one merges into “**Aksharbrahma**”.

‘But you had said that Bondage is caused due to “**Avidya**”?.’

‘Quite true. Due to Avidya, one misunderstands that he is **body**, **senses** etc, called “**Adhyaas**”, (mistaken identity), and forgets his true nature. (Svarup vismruti). This causes Bondage.’

‘What is the solution to get Liberated?’

‘Like Avidya, “**Vidya**” is another power of God. That too is five folded viz. **Vairaagya**, **Saankhya**, **Yoga**, **Tapas**, and a **Bhakti**, which we discussed earlier. These Vidyas are capable to counter five folded Avidya and destroy them.’

‘You mean the mistaken identity (**Adhyaas**) is removed by these Vidyas and Jivaatma gets liberated?.’

‘By the removal of Ahyaas, one gets liberated from the “**Samsaar**”, i.e. notion of I-ness and My-ness , but he does not die until his potential fruits (rewards) of “**Sanchit**” and “**Praarabdh**” karmas (actions) are fulfilled, (enjoyment or sufferings)’.

‘How do you describe that state of Jivaatma?.’

‘Such a state when the Adhyaas (wrong notions) are vanished, yet one is living is called “**Jivan-Mukta**”.’

‘Means “Jivan mukti” is the liberation from the notion of I-ness and My-ness (Ahantaa-Mamataa)?.’

‘Yes, such Jivaatma is not yet liberated from worldly bondage’.

‘When does he gets fully liberated?.’

‘When one is freed from the present as well as future bodies (meaning no future births), it is called “**Videhmukti**”.

‘What is the state of Jivaatma on getting “Videhmukti?”’

‘Jivaatma gets placement according to his eligibility, which is decided by God Himself. Evil (Aasuri) jivaatma never gets liberated.’

‘What is the nature of “Moksh” (liberation) from SriVallabhacharyaji’s point of view?’

‘According to him, to get free from the sufferings, or to merge into God is not “Liberation”, but real Moksh is to realize Real permanent Bliss of God’

‘What is its significance?’

‘God being **“Sachchidanand”**, He is **“Anand”** Himself. Sruti says - “Bliss is synonymous of Brahman” - **“Anando Brahmeti vyajanaat”**. As such, according to SriVallabhaacharyaji, to acquire that Bliss, i.e. to realize God is real Moksh.’

‘Does it mean that ultimate goal is to realize God?’.

‘Yes, ‘SriVallabhacharyaji says, **“Bhagavaanev falam”**, i.e. “God Himself is Reward”. That is our goal, not merely to get merged into God.’

‘Then, whether our destination is **“Aksharbrahm”**?’

‘No, because it has limited bliss only, whereas, as is said in Gita, **“Purushottam Lord Srikrushna is much more than that”**, i.e. He is having infinite Bliss (Purnaananand)’.

‘You mean that, to realize Srikrushna is “Moksh”!’.
‘Infact, more than that. Moksh is a state where you loose your identity. Pushti souls wish to achieve “Bhaki” (Devotion), by which you can relish God’s Divine Sports (Lilaa).’

‘But scriptures prescribe “.Moksh” as forth purushaarth?’.

‘.SriVallabhacharyaji advocates “Bhakti” as fifth purushaarth, which is more than Moksh’.

‘That means - Pushti Souls desire **“Bhakti”** and not **“Mukti”**?’.

‘Exectlly’

25. “PATHS OF LIBERATION”

‘Whether all jivaatma are eligible for liberation.

‘No, “**Aasuri**” i.e. “**Pravahi**” jivas are not liberated, but they continue to transmigrate from one “yoni” to another and move in the cycles of birth and death until the whole world gets dissolved.’

‘Why is it so?’

‘Those jivaatmas, whom God wishes to fall in the category of “**Aasuri**”, He implants into them, at the time of creation itself, when they get separated from God, various vices, or evils, which become obstacles for their liberation. As such, they engage in bad deeds due to their nature. Hence they continue to take births in such unworthy species (yoni).’

‘Oh, it means they are to take births continuously in different yonies and die!. Such is their fate!’.

‘Yes, they never get liberated’.

‘What happens to them at the time of dissolution?’

‘When God wishes to wind-up His “**Srushti-lila**”, the game of creation, He demolishes their “**Avidya**”, and absorbs them into Self. They merge into God.,’

‘Means “**Asuri jivas**” do’nt get liberated by their efforts!.’

‘True, that is the scheme of the sport of God’.

‘What about **Pushti** and **Maryada** jivas?’.

‘For the liberation of Pushti jivas and Maryada jivas, various paths are prescribed - viz., “**Path of Action**”

(Karma marga), **“Path of Knowledge”**, (Jnaan marga), **“Path of Devotion”** (Bhaktimarga) etc.’

‘Please elaborate these paths’.

26. **“PATH OF ACTION - PATH OF KNOWLEDGE”**

‘What is **“Path of Action”**?’.

‘There are two parts of Veda namely,
1. **“Purvakand”** which is also called **“Karma kaand”**.
and 2. **“Uttarkaand”**, also known as “Jnaan kand”.

‘Why is it called **“Karmkaand”**?’.

‘Because, in **Purvakand**, various types of
Sacrifices (Yajyas) are prescribed.’

‘What is their significance?.’

‘It is said that one can attain an Empire or Hevan or
wharever one may desire by performing sacrifices, i.e.
Action (Karma)’.

‘Whether one can attain Salvation (moksh) by
Action?’.

‘It is said that when a man exhausts the fruits of all
types of Actions (karmas) - accumulated as well as those
resulted due to destiny), and one stops further action
which may bear fruits, one gets deliverance and there is
no birth thereafter’.

‘What are **“Sanchit karma”** and **“Praarabdh
karma”**?’.

‘When we perform some Action, a potentiality to

result them into some fruit, is created known as **“Apuva”**.

‘Do we get fruits of all our Actions immediately?’
‘No we get rewards of our Actions in the same birth or any one thereafter, as per **“Will of God”**. The Actions get accumulated untill their fruits are enjoyed. They are called **“Sanchit karma”**.’

‘And what is “Praarabdh karma”?’

‘Those Actions of our past births, which result into fruits in this birth are called **“Praarabdh Karma”**.’

‘That means whatever may be our Actions, we are bound to get their rewards!..’

‘No, whatever Action that we offer to God, or performing Action without expecting fruits or any desire, (Nishkaam karma), they do’nt bind us with any reward.’

‘That means, it is our Actions which give their rewards!..’

‘No, Action creates potentiality of rewards, but the fruits are given, in fact, by God only, as clarified by SriVallabhacharyaji in Anubhaashy’. The Action ends when its fruits are enjoyed.’

‘It is said in Gita - **“Perform you duty, do not worry for its rewards”**. Please explain the significance of this verse?’

‘It is necessary for everybody to perform his duty (karma), according to his **“Varnaasram dharma”**. The reward of such Karma is given by God. As such one

should not expect any definite reward. Rather, one should perform Action without desiring any fruit.’.

‘Should the sacrifices (Yajna) too be performed without any motive ?.

‘Ofcourse. SriVallabhacharyaji has described three types of “**Yajnas**” in Subodhini - namely , “**Adhibhautic**” - ‘those done with some desire; “**Adhyaatmic**” - one performed for purification of one’s “Chitta” ; and “**Adhidaivik**”, sacrifice performed for the sake of God. which is best one”’.

‘Is there any limitation for “Path of Action”.

‘Yes, the reward of an Action is not perpetual. It persists until one enjoys its fruits. After having enjoyed the fruits, one has to come in the cycle of birth and death.

‘Moreover, its parameters viz., **Place, Time, Materials, Hymns, Performer** and the **Priest**, should be pure - pious. Otherwise, it does not yield desired fruit.’

‘Oh, then this path is quite difficult and uncertain!

‘Yes, that is why SriVallabhacharyaji suggests to perform Karma merelly for the

purification of inner faculties (Antahkaran) only, not as means of salvation, which, according to him, can be achieved by “**Devotion**” (Bhakti).

“What is the “**Path of Knowledge**”?”

‘As we learn various useful subjects to live, it is also necessary to acquire Divine Knowledge which can lead us towards emancipation’.

‘Does it mean to study about God and Spirituality as we study various topics?’

‘No, it is not merely to acquire the informations by our senses or by our intellect only, but to comprehend the deeper knowledge of the scriptures through which we can have Divine experience by our soul’

‘How do we have such Knowledge?’

‘According to Shankaracharyji, Divine Knowledge symbolises God. As such, when we have deep study of the scriptures namely, **Vedas, Gita and Brahmsutras**, collectively called “**Prashtan Trayi**”, we can comprehend the true nature of the Reality - God. However, it requires to adopt four means, viz., Non-attachment (Vairaagya), to distinguish between permanent and temporary objects, Tapas, and Yoga, so that our neiscience (Avidya) may venish.’

‘But how do we realise God by such knowledge?’.

‘Shankaracharyaji explains that, there is no difference between “**Atma**” (soul) and “**Paramatma**” (God). Both are one and same. When we understand the real nature of “**Brahman**”, we can identify ourshelves as “**Brahman**”. That is called “**Brahm Saakshatkar**”.

‘Is it for that reason that those following Path of knowledge says - “**Aham Brahmaasmi**” i.e. I am Brahman?’.

‘Yes, by knowing Brahman, one perceives Brahman everywhere. He experiences Bliss of Brahman, called “**Brahmaanand**”.

‘Is that the stage of salvation (moksh)?.’

‘Yes, that is called Moksh in the Patha of Knowledge’.

‘Does one experience Delight of Purushottam by this path?’.

‘No, one merges in “Aksharbrahm” only, but can not realize “Purn Purushottam, the Ultimate Reality. For that, SriVallabhaacharyaji advocates to follow the “Path of Divotion” (**Bhaktimarg**).

27 “PATH OF DEVOTION”

‘What is the “Path of Devotion”?’

‘The path to acquire Salvation (moksh) by pleasing God by worshipping His any form, i.e. by devotion (bhakti) is called “**Path of Devotion**”.

‘What is the significance of “**Devotion**”?’.

‘The simple meaning of the word “Devotion” is pure love for God. There are various means of worship called “**Upaasana**” to please God. We find descriptions of worshiping various gods viz., Agni, Indra, Mitra, Varun etc. in Vedas.

‘Do we find the proof of this path in any other scriptures?’.

‘Yes, both Gita and Bhagavat prescribe “Path of Devotion” as means of emancipation. Lord Srikrushn says to Arjun in Gita - “**I can be realised by a devotee only by the exclusive devotion (ananya bhakti) towards me.**” In Bhagavat too, God explains to

Uddhavji that “**Neither by Saamkhy, Yoga, Tapa, nor Vairaagya, one can realize me. I am approachable only by Devotion**”.

‘How is the “**Path of Devotion**” superior to other paths?.’

‘The fruits acquired by this path is perpetual unlike in the case of Path of Action, where, after the fruits are enjoyed, one returns into the cycle of births and deaths. This path is simpler and is not dependant of factors like time, place, offerings etc. Irrespective of caste, creed or sex, any one can adopt this path.’

‘What is the significance of “**Path of Maryada Bhakti**”?’.

‘It is the Path wherein various means viz., **Tapa, Daan, Archan** etc are instrumental for woshipping God, and as such, the Devotion is guided by scriptural insructions. By adopting various means of worship, one can achieve one of the kind of salvation viz., **Saayujya, Saalokya, Saamipya, Saarupya** or **Saartshti**.’

‘Then, what is the “**Path of Pushti Bhakti**”?’.

‘It is the Path of Devotion, which is not dependant on the means adopted by the devotee, but, it entirely depends on the “**Grace of God**”.

28. “DEVOTION-(BHAKTI)”

‘What is the difference between “**Bhakti**” and “**Upaasana**”?’.

“Upaasana” is the type of Bhakti done with some purpose, wherein a devotee intends to please a God to gain some thing as reward. It is a type of “Maryaada Bhakti”.

‘Whether there are different types of Bhakti ?.’”

‘Yes, in Bhagavat, nine types of Bhaktis are described called “**Navadhaa Bhakti**”, i..e. “Nine folded Bhakti”.

‘Which are those different types?’

‘They are **Sravan** - Hearing, **Kirtan** - Singing, **Smaran** - Remembering, **Archan** - Performing Puja, **Paad sevan** - Worshipping Feet, **Vandan** - Greeting with folded hands, **Daasya** - As a servant, - **Sakhya** - As a friend, and **Atmanivedan** - Total surrender’.

‘Will you please elaborate ?.’

‘Different devotees symbolises these various types of Devotion who got deliverance, viz., **Parikshit** by listening “Bhagavat katha” and **Shukdevji** - by telling the same, **Prahladji** by remembering glory of God, **Pruthu raaja** by performing puja, **Lakshmiji** worshipped at the feet of Vishnu, **Akrurji** by greeting, **Hanumaanji** served Ramachandraji faithfully as servant, **Arjun** became truthful friend and **Baliraja** surenderd and offered whatever he had. Each of them got salvation.’

‘That means that each of these devotional act can deliver a devotee?’.

‘True. They are the types of Devotion which can

lead to “Moksh”, i.e. merging into God, but not to realise **Purushottam**, the Supreme Being, or to witness His Divine Sports.’

‘Then, how can one achieve that?.’

‘Upanishad declares that The Supreme Reality can neither be realized by “Pravachan” (preaching), by Intellect, nor by “listening” (kathaa), but He can be realised if “**He Himself chooses one**”, i.e., by His own Grace.’

‘How can one acquire God’s Grace?’.

‘No body can tell that, as God is totally independent and acts as per His Own Will. Yet to bestow Grace is one of God’s characteristics. SriVallabhacharyaji explains that The Lord SriKrushn can be pleased with utmost devotion (**Nirgun Bhakti**) without any motive whatsoever, i.e. by Pure Love, called “Pushti Bhakti”

29. “PUSHTI BHAKTI”

‘What is the significance of “**Pushti-Bhakti**”?’

‘As “Scriptural devotion” (Maryada bhakti) depends on various means prescribed in scriptures viz., “**Japa, Tapas, Charity** etc.” “Pushti Bhakti” has bearing on the “**Grace**” of God Himself’.

‘How can one acquire The Grace of God?’.

‘A devotee has to have unadulterated love in his pure heart for God. ShriVallabhaacharyaji defines “Bhakti” as “**An intense undettered love for God fully being**

aware of His glory and greatness”.

‘Why is it necessary to have knowledge of glory and greatness of God?’

‘We should be aware that God exists in every nook and corner of the world, and the whole universe is contained within Him. He is Omnipotent, Omnipresent and omniscient. By the Knowledge of His such greatness, there shall be natural love for Him. That is termed as “Bhakti”.

‘How does “Bhakti” develops in a devotee?’.

‘ShriVallabhacharyaji explains that when a soul gets seperated from God at the time of creation, He implants a seed of “**Bhakti**” in those whom He chooses to be a “**Pushti jiva**”. When God desires such soul to be emancipated, that seed, due to contact of a “**Guru**” or a “**Bhagavadiya**”, germinates as Love for God, and develops as a strong attachment, which eventually culminates into addiction for God. The devotee feels God surrounding him and he can experience His Divine sport.’.

‘Do you mean that “**Bhakti**” and “**Grace**” are inter-related?’.

‘Yes, when there is a flow of “**Grace**” from God towards a devotee, it rebounds back from his heart, which is termed as “**Pushti**”, and the devotion of the devotee is called “**Pushti-Bhakti**”.

30. “PUSHTIMARG”

‘What is meant by “**Pushtimarg**”?’.

“**Pushtimarg**” is a spiritual path to realize God by His “Pushti” i.e. Grace.’

‘How can one be blessed by His Grace?’.

‘God gets pleased by His exclusive Devotion (Ananya Bhakti). Lord Shrikrushna says in Gita - “**Those devotees worshiping me with utter faith, have full engrosment in me, are very dear to me**”. If God is pleased, He may bestow His Grace on a devotee.’

‘By “**Bhakti**” (Devotion), you mean utter pure Love for God, is’nt it?’.

‘Exectly. It is called “**Prem Lakshana Bhakti**” or “Pushti bhakti”, and the path wherein “**Pushti bhakti**” is instrumental to realize God, is called “**Pushti bhaktimarg**” or “**Pushtimarg**”.

‘What are the main principles of “Pushtimarg”?’.

‘There are four basic features of Pushtimarg viz., Bhakti (Devotion), **Sharanaagati** (Refuge), **Samarpan** (i.e offering everything- surrender), and **Seva** (Worship)’.

‘Are these features inter-related?’.

‘Yes. Do you know which are the basic ingredients of “Bhakti”?’.

‘Yes 1.**Knowledge of glory and greatness of God** (Mahaatmya gyaan) and 2.**Utmost Love for Him.**’

‘We seek refuge of one who is Able in every respect, as

he can protect us fully. Is'nt it?.

'You mean we acquire "**Sharanaagati**" due to God being "Omnipotent". And, how does it helps to Love Him?.'

'You know that we dedicate / offer everything of ours to one whom we love, viz., our children, spouse etc.!.

'Quite true.'

'Similarly, if we love God, it makes us to dedicate / offer everything and surrender to Him. That is called "**Samarpan**".

'I could understand. And what about "**Seva**"?.'

'If you have devotion i.e. Bhakti towards anyone, how shall you express that?, how one can appreciate it?.'

'By serving him whole heartedly ,of course, i.e. by performing his Seva'.

Thus you can appreciate that **Bhakti**, **Sharanaagati**, **Samarpan** and **Seva** are interwoven. Is'nt it?.'

'Well explained, but will you please elaborate?'

31. "REFUGE - SHARANAAGATI"

'What is the significance of "Sharanaagati" (refuge)?'.

'There are two meanings of "**Sharan**". -A Home and One who protects.'

'Whether "**Aasray**" (refuge) is synonym word?.'

‘Yes, “**Aasray**” means one who provides refuge and another, the process of protecting. By seeking refuge, one becomes fearless, because to protect is the responsibility of one who provides refuge.’

‘Will you explain with some example?’

‘To remove the grief of Arjun, when inspite explaining various means, he was not satisfisd, Lord krushn advised him that “**You just surrender to me, I shall deliver you from all the sins**”.

‘You mean the probable ill-effects of killings by Anjun that would have happened in the war?’.

‘Yes, God is onnipotent. He can do or undo anything if one seeks His unconditional refuge.’.

‘What is the significance of “**Sharanaagati**” in Pushtimarg’?.’

‘Pushtimarg is the path of “**Grace**”.It does not depend on the means of a devotee, i.e. it is a path of be coming devoid of all “Means” (**Nissadhanta**). When one is devoid of any means, one doesn’t have any alternative but to seek refuge of God. In such an event, God liberates the soul by His Grace.’.

‘Quite true. Why God should bother, if devotee has pride for his ability and depends on it?’

‘Yes, if one considers God as his Master and surrenders to Him, it is the responsibility of God to deliver him. SriVallabhacharyaji says in “**krushnaasray**” that as in kaliyug none of the means works, “**Srikrushn’s refuge is the only means**”.

One must surrender to Him.'

'Pushtimarg" is the "Path of Devotion". Then, whether "Sharanaagati" is an alternative?'

'The knowledge of greatness and glory of God is an essential aspect of Devotion, which provides the sense of protection (refuge). That is, "**Sharanaagati**" is an ingredient of Devotion. Without seeking refuge of God, there cannot be true Devotion.'

'You mean that "**Sharanaagati**" is not an alternative of Devotion?'

'No, it is, in fact, an alternative of Devotion also. As such Pushtimarg is called "Prathak sharanmarg", i.e. "A distinct path of Refuge". SriVallabhacharyaji says that since in "Kaliyug", when various paths including Devotion are non-functional, one can get emancipation by seeking Refuge of God.'

'Whether one requires to be initiated for that?'

'Yes. One should get initiated by an "**Achary**" who gives a hymn "**Shrikrshn sharanam mama**", called "**Ashtaakshar mantra**", which should be recited all the time'.

'Are there any rules to follow that?'

'Yes, SriVallabhacharyaji has prescribed six aspects of Sharanaagati, namely -

1. To act according to what suits the nature of God.
2. To leave whatever is disliked by God.
3. To believe that whatever God does, is always in the best of your interest.

4. To consider God as your Master.

5. To dedicate everything of yours to God.

6. To be humble, which can be inculcated by considering oneself as His humble servant.'

'What are the duties of a devotee "?.

'They are -

1. Devotee should have a sense of surrender to God always.

2. Devotee should not seek Refuge of any one else other than Srikrushna by body-speech-mind, i.e. "Ananyaashray" of Srikrushna only.

3. Devotee must depend solely on God.

4. Devotee should enjoy or sustain the fruits, whether pleasure or pains, of his deeds, good or bad, seeking refuge of God always.

32. "SAMARPAN"

'You had said that "We offer everything of ours to Shrikrushna due to sheer Love for Him". Please elaborate.'

'Yes, you know that we give everything belonging to us to our children, wife. Is 'nt it?. Why?.

'True. Because we love them'.

'Similarly, if we have "**True Love for God**", we must offer each and everything of ours to Him'.

'Do you mean we should donate our entire belongings to God?.

'No, I am not saying that. We have not to donate,

but ‘Offer’ called “**Samarpan**”.

‘What is the difference between the two?’

‘While we donate something to other, we do not remain its owner anymore. We make the donee as its owner. Thereafter, we can not use the things donated by us.’

‘And happens in what you call “**Samarpan**” ?, does it not mean the same thing?.’

‘Look, what we believe to be ours, are not truly ours!. Whatever, wealth, property, house etc. do not belong to us in true sense. That is our false understanding. In fact, everything is created by God, and as such they belong to Him only. So, we accept the truth, and make assertion in that respect before God.’

‘You mean that we confess the fact, that everything, in realty are His only’

‘Yes, it is like surrendering to God totally, similar to a wife, after marriage, surrenders to her husband and offers everything of hers, including self to her husband. Thereafter, she can not use her belongings exclusively for her but shares with her husband.’

‘In that event, when we admit that everything of ours belong to God only, how can we manage our life, i.e. livelihood?.

‘When we admit (**Nivedan**) to offer everything of ours to God and accept to be His “**Daas**” (servant), we have to, in practice , make use of them i e. our belongings exclusively for Him, it is called “**Viniyog**”.

The things consumed by God are His **“Prasaad”**. Our **“Samarpan”** is accomplished in true sense only after that.’

‘Can we make use of the things for ourselves once put to His use, as His **“Prasaad”**?’

‘Of course!. As in day-to-day practice, normally our servant can utilize the things once they are used or consumed by his master. Similarly, we can manage our livelihood with the things offered to God, as His **“Pradsaad”**.’

‘How can we offer each and everything to God?.’

‘Certain things like food, clothes etc. can be offered directly to God, for His use, whereas, persons like our children or family etc. can be utilized for serving God, which can be said as indirect offering. Thereby we can accomplish our **“Samarpan”** fully.’

‘You mean **“Samarpan”** of everything is an essential criteria of **“Pushtimargiya life”**!’.

‘Exactly. ShriVallabhacharyaji has explained that once you seek refuge of God, we should totally surrender and offer everything, not only of present life, but life beyond, and serve Him with total devotion as His servant to achieve the final goal’.

‘Whether there is any process of initiation for **“Samarpan”**, similar to that of **“Sharanaagati”**?.’

‘Yes, one is required to get initiated by **“Brahmsambadh dikshaa”** for **“Samarpan”**.’

‘What is Brahmsambandh?. Please elaborate.’

33. “BRAHMSAMBANDH DIKSHA”

‘What is the significance of “**Brahmsambandh**”?’

‘Simple meaning of “**Brahmasambandh**” is to get united with God. In fact We are the part (amsha) of God. We are seperated from Him since millaniums, and as such, we have forgotten our true identity due to nescience (Avidya). Hence we are trapped in the cycle of births and deaths. Therefore ShriVallabhacharyaji is incarnated to salvage us from this situation and reunite us with God”.

‘How could a soul get united with God?’

‘Exactly that question had puzzled ShriVallabhacharyaji too! He was worrying that God is pure, without any evils whereas souls have harboured many vices!.’

‘Once, at Gokul, when he was in deep thought regarding this issue, at midnight, God appeared before him and gave a hymn and ordained him that “whosoever, he will imitate with this hymn, none of the vices shall be hinderance in his sublimation and He shall accept the services of such soul”.

‘What is that hymn?’

‘In the hymn, jivaatma tells God solemnly that “**I jiva, having been separated since millenniums, due to which have become devoid of the bliss of your cravings, hereby make dedicated offerings, to Lord Krushn, of everything that I believed to**

be mine, viz., wife, house, children, family, wealth, all pertaining to this world and beyond, including myself. I say, I am your servant, Krishna! I am yours only”.

‘Whether this hymn is to be spoken before God?’

‘No, there is a process of initiation. ShriVallabhacharyaji would initiate a disciple who takes an oath by speaking the hymn word by word as the Guru makes him to speak, before God’. This is exclusive prerogative of ShriVallabhacharyaji to initiate the disciples.

‘But in the current times, when Shri Vallabhacharyaji is not present, how can one be initiated?’

‘You know that ShriVallabhacharyaji being an incarnation of the face of ShriKrushana, he is not confined by the time. He initiates his followers in present time through his descendants’.

‘That means SriVallabhacharyaji is the “**Guru**” of everybody whosoever are initiated with “Brahm-sambandh mantra”, irrespective of which of his descendants initiates?’

‘Exactly. Therefore the descendant acharya who initiates the followers in present time, on behalf of Shri Vallabhacharyaji is known as “**Gurudwar**”. As such, one should respect those Acharyas as Sri Vallabhacharyaji, although one Guru is none other than SriVallabhacharyaji only.’

‘Quite clear now. But why do we call it “**Samarpan diksha**”?’

‘Because while being initiated, we solemnly assert before Lord Shri Krushna to offer to Him, whatever, hither to believed to be belonging to us, including ourself, and we surrender totally to Him, saying that “**I am your servent**”. That is called “**Samarpan**”.

‘And we confess saying that “Krishna, I am yours”, meaning we consider Krushna as our master.

‘Exactly. It is therefore, like tying a knot with Shri Krushna, establishing relationship similar to that of a husband and wife. Therefore, we are duty-bound to serve Shri Krushna all through our life’.

‘But, jiva is corrupt with many evils, whereas The Lord is pure, how could such relation be established?’

‘True. Jiva has evils (dosha) of five types viz., ordinary, as well as those developed due to place, time, involment and contact. ShriVallabhacharyji explains that by initiation with “Brahm-sambandh mantra”, those evils no more create hindrance in the service of Shri Krushna’.

‘But there could be chances of recurring the evils again!’

‘Quite true. ShriVallabhacharyji, therefore advises to refrain from using anything not offered to God called “Asamarpit”. We must bring in use (viniyog), directly or indirectly, everything which we have offered to Shri Krushna while being initiated. Our “Samarpan” is

fulfilled totally only then.'

'Can we make use of the things, after we offer and cause them to use for Shri Krushna?'

'Of course!, you can maintain your living by the things offered to Shri Krushna as His "Prasad". But, you should never offer anything to the Lord if the same is used before hand, for your own use, as it becomes "**Ardha-bhukt**" (utilised before).

'I do appreciate.'

34. "SEVA"

'You had said that "**Seva**" is the fourth pillar of "**Pushtimarg**". Please elaborate.'

'While being initiated with "**Brahmsambabdh - diksha**", we accept to be the servant (Daas) of Lord Shrikrushna. Is' nt it ?. What is the duty of a servant?'

'Of course, to serve the Master!'

'Exactly. That is why ShriVallabhacharyaji has said - "**To serve Srikrushn always is the main principle, of mine**".

'You mean, serving Shrikrushn is the prime duty of a vaishnava?'

'Yes, rightly you have understood. We are part (Amsh) of the Whole (Amshi), the God. As such, it is the natural duty of an "**Amsh**" to serve the "**Amshi**". SriVallabhacharyaji, therefore, advocates that "To worship The king of Vraj, SriKrushn, is the only duty (Dharm) of a "Pushti Jiva".

‘What is the distinction between **“Bhakti”** and **“Seva”**?’

‘We know that “Bhakti” (Devotioj) is defined as - “To have emotional love for God, fully knowing His greatness and glory”.

‘Yes, I know that.’

‘If one loves somebody, how can one express one’s love?’

‘Off course by serving and taking his care only!’.

‘Quite true. But how can we serve the God who is omnipresent?’.

‘We can serve Him by establishing Him in our house, in the form of a picture of **“Shrinathaji”** who is the form of ShriKrushn, or His idol, His form as a child (called **“Laalan”**), duly treated specially by an Acharya of Vallabhkul. Thence, any such form is the God in reality, and our personal relationship is established with God.’

‘What is the necessity of getting the special treatment by an Acharya?’.

‘By reciting certain hymns of Veda, -Bhagavat etc, by the Acharya, Divinity as **“Purushottam”** is invoked, in the idol due to which the **“Svarup”** (deity) accepts our offerings, and reciprocates to our devotional worship. It eventually results into true “Realization”.

‘One should understand that one is serving Shri Krushana in true sense and not merely an idol.’

‘Why does ShriVallabhacharyji describe **“Krushna**

Seva” as his principle?.’

‘There is a great significance of his quote’.

‘Please elaborate’.

‘When we are initiated with **“Brahmasambandh mantra”**, we assert to dedicate each and every thing of ours unto Lord ShriKrushn. That means we forgo our ego and relinquish our sense of belonging in all material things we possess, and admit that all those, including “Self” are for the use of ShriKrushna only. To translate this vow, ShriVallabhacharyaji has advised to perform “Krushn seva” in the form of **“Tanu-Vittaja”**, as means.’

‘What does he mean by **“Tanu-Vittaja”**?.’

“Tanu” means with our body and **“Vitta”** means all what we understand to be belonging to us. We should serve ShriKrushna with both, our body and using every thing believed to be ours. The purpose being to get detached from our ego and attachment in our belongings.’

‘Oh! it means our **“Samsar”** created due to our false understanding of **“I - ness”** and **“My - ness”** can get vanished!’, Is that the purpose?’

‘Exactly. The beauty of it is that we need not leave our “Self” and our belongings, which we call “Mine”, physically, but we have to unite them with ShriKrushn by employing them for his “Seva” (service).

‘Quite clear now. Does that mean that merely using our body for performing seva on behalf of others, or by utilizing our wealth only for that purpose, is not

considered **“Seva”**?’

‘Very true. Because that does not serve the purpose for which ShriVallabhacharyaji is advising to perform “Krushna-Seva”. By his sermon **“Krushn seva sada karyaa”**, he means that, all the activities of a devotee must be directed towards ShriKrushna, both manually and with his possession. He wants ShriKrushna to be the beneficiary of all the pursuits of a devotee, so that his **“Chitta”** (consciousness) remains always attached with Shrikrushna.’

‘You mean that **“Tanu-Vittaja”** Seva is to be performed as **“Means”** so that eventually, devotee gets united with Kruahna. And that is the Reward (Fal), the goal of Bhakti.’

‘That is why ShriVallabhacharyaji says - **“Chetastat pravanam seva”** and **“Maanasi sa paraa mataa”**, meaning that, eventuality when our consciousness penetrates in our performance of Seva, it is called **“Manasi Seva”**, which is Reward. Look, the being of this concept, **“Krushna Seva”** as means in initial stage, itself becomes “Fat”, when it culminates into **“Maansi” state.**’

‘Nice. The concept and significance of **“Seva”** is perfectly clear.’

‘What is the signification of Seva of Shri Krushna only?’

‘Bhagwat says- **“Shri Krushana is God**

Himself. All other incarnations are partial manifestation of Him". Krushna is the embodiment of insite **Bliss**, as such called "Purnanand". Therefore ShriVallabhacharyaji advocates to serve the supreme one - Shri Krushna only.'

'But there are many forms of Shri Krushana. Whom should be serve?'

'Bhagwat describes various lilas (divine sports) of Shri Krushana with "Vraj bhaktas". We may choose any of the forms of such Lilas that we like, viz., **Shri Nathji, Shri Navneet priyaji, Shri Mathureshji, Shri Vitthalnathji, Shri Dwarkadhishji, Shri Gokulnathji, Shri Gokulchandramaji, Shri Balkrushnalalji, Shri Madanmohanji.**'

'What is the rituals of "**Seva**" in pushtimarg?'

'In "**Maryadamarga**" (scriptural path), there is the importance of the glory and greatness of God, and as such, God is worshiped by this puja, archana, naivedya (offerings) etc. Whereas, in "**Pushtimarga**", there is an element of emotional love towards God, who is served as a divine child in the place of Nandrayji. "**Krushna**" is considered as an integral part of our family. As such, He is groomed like His up-bringing by His mother **Yashoda**, and **Vrajbhaktas**.'

'You mean we should treat Krushana as a child?'

'Exactly. We should treat Him like humanbeing. He can feel cold and hot as per climate, He can be hungry

and thirsty like us. So we should make Him comfortable in every respects.'

'Oh! That is why, it is not merely worship or puja, and called "**Seva**", i.e. serving with emotional love!'

Quite true. In the initial stage, it is called "**Tanu-Vittaja**" seva, i.e. serving God with our body as well as with our wealth or what our belongs to us, once it becomes our habit and routine, a bond is created with Krushana and we fall is **Love** with him. It eventually calminates into an **Attachment** and ultimately results into an **Addiction**. When we reach such a state, we can not live without Shri Krushana. We get united mentally with Him. That is the ultimate goal, a reward (fal) in pushtimarg. It is called "**Mansi Seva**". The final state is termed as "**Nirodh**" and "**Sarvatmabhaav**".

35. "**SARVATMABHAAV**"

'What is meant by "**Sarvatmabhaav**"?'

"**Sarvatmabhaav**" is a state of addition of a devotee, which is created in him after accomplishing "**Maanasi**". It is the specific state of devotion wherein the divine emotional is at its peace.'

'What is the significance of "**Sarvatmabhaav**"?'

'There are three words in "Sarvatmabhaav". "**Sarva**", meaning all our integral parts - body, senses, vital, internal organs and our indinations; "**Atma**", which denotes God and "**Bhaav**" - i.e. love, emotions or

devotion. If we connect these three words, it implies that there is a strong attachment with God due to His devotional services as well as reating His name, we experience a divine bliss of God. That is what is called **“Sarvatmabhaav”**.

‘Whether a devotee, in such a state experience an identity of God everywhere?’

‘Yes, one visulizes Krushana in everything around. Consciousness and bliss of Brahman, which are concealed in the world get manifested before the devotee so thah he can experience the elements of Brahman universally.’

‘Is it the same as a “Gyani” saying **“I am Brahman”**, as he visualizes Brahman around him?’

‘No. These is difference between the **“Pushti margiya Sarvatmabhaav”** and **“Maryada margiya Sarvatmabhaav”**. Where in the latter is to experience **“Brahmanand”** by the soul, where as in the former the devotee experiences **“Bhajanand”** by all his body, sences, internal faculties etc.’

‘Whether devotee experiences **“Sarvatmabhaav”** according to his emotions?’

‘Yes. There are different emotions in each of the devotee. Some have feeling of servant, or as a friend, or the emotions of towards a child or a beloved. It is the experience reciprocated as per the emotions of each devotee.’

36. “NIRODHA”

‘What is the significance of “**Nirodha**”?’

‘The meaning of “Nirodha” is a state of mind wherein one gets united with the God while the world around is totally forgotten.’

‘There is a concept of “**Nirodha**” in “**Yoga**” also!’

‘Yes, but, in yoga, it is the mental condition only, while, in “**Pushti Bhakti marg**”, devotee get united with God by all including body, senses, vital, mind, intelligent, ego and soul as well.’

‘Whether there is a reverse process too, i.e. God gets united with his devotee?’

‘Yes. Shri Krushana says in Gita - “Those devotees who worship me extensively, they remain in me and I reside in them”.

‘How can one achieve a state of “**Nirodha**”?’

‘Tenth canto of Bhagavat is called “**Nirodha Lila**”. There are various divine sports of Shri Krushana are described, the purpose where of is to get the minds of the vrajbhaktas with Him. Where He was incarded. However when Shri Krushana is not present physically before a devotee, he can experience such a state by worship in Him in his home.’

‘What is the purpose of “Nirodha”?’

‘Various rewards (fal) described by Shri Vallabhacharyaji in his literary work “**Sevafal**” is the culmination of “Nirodha”.

“How does a devotee gets affected by **“Nirodha”**?
‘It is the similar effect as that of addiction. A devotee forgets the world due to strong attachment with God, both in his presence and absence’.

37. “PUSHTI FAL”

‘What are the desires of a **“Pushti jiva”**?’

‘Shri Vallabhacharyaji says - **“To realize the god”** is the only desire of a devotee in Pushtimarg’, because it is the only reward he wishes to acquire.’

‘How does one achieve it?’

‘God gets manifested before a devotee in two ways, viz. 1. By svarup, i.e. acquiring a form called **“Bahya Sanyog”**, 2. By His attributes, called **“Antar Sanyog”**.’

‘Will you please elaborate?’

‘When God manifests before a devotee when he can have his glimpses, or can converse, touch or play with Him, that is possible when he appear in “person”. (svarup), but when he manifests within the heart of a devotee due to which he can narrate this attributes, is the manifestation by “Attributes”.’

‘How does a devotee get a reward by devotion?’

‘There are three rewarda (fal) explained by Shri Vallabhacharyaji in his scripture **“Sevafal”**, viz. 1. **Divine Potency**, 2. **Sayujya-merging into God**, 3. **Divine body useful in seva.**’

‘What is meant by Divine Potency?’

‘Some of the divine attributes of God get developed into devotee, such a state is called “**Jivan Mukti**”.’

‘And what is meant by “**Sayujya**”?’

‘When the soul gets merged into body of Shri Krushana, it is called “**Sayujya**”. It is also termed as “**Videh Mukti**”, since, on getting the soul dissolved into God, all his body senses, etc. also get merged into five vital elements.’

‘Oh, so it is similar to one obtained as a reward of “**Maryada Bhakti**”.’

‘No, there is a difference. There, it is merging into ‘**Aksharbrahma**’, whereas, in this reward of ‘Sayujya’, the soul enters into “**Purushottam**” who, when He wishes would bring the soul out of experiences this divine sport.’

‘And what is meant by acquiring body useful in seva?’

‘After death, the devotee receives a new body useful in the service of God in this abode like Vaikunth etc.’

38. “ANANYATA-ANYASHRAY”

‘What is meant by “**Ananyata**”, and why is it important in Pushtimarg?’

‘When we are initiated with Brahmasambandha, we assert before Shri Krushana by saying “**I am your servant**”, and “**I am yours alone**”. By the former statement we accept His refuge and the latter, statement reflect our total dedication. As such, it is essential to

show our full alligience in Shri Krushana.'

'You mean our dedication should be exclusive for Shri Krushana?'

'Yes, Shri Vallabhacharyaji suggest our madultrated alligience towards Shri Krushana.'

'What does it signify?'

'Our total choice fully for Shri Krushana, with the exclusion of any of the demi God, or earthly materials and relinquishing our total interest therein, is termed as "**Ananya Bhav**".'

'Is there any striptural testimony for such an ideology?'

'Yes, in Gita, Shri Krushana has said- "Those worshiping me exclusively, thinking only about me, I undertake to take care of all their needs." Lastly, while advising Arjun, He has asked him to totally surrendering to Him alone.'

'You mean, exclusive devotion is essential?'

'Yes. And hence to keep faith in others called "**Anyashraya**" is harmful in pushtimarg.'

'How do you define "**Anyashraya**"?'

'Shri Vallanhacharyaji has explained that to worship any demi-god except Shri Krushana, to go for their "**Darshan**" or take "**Prasad**" is or to rely on others for any benefit, is called "**Anyashraya**".'

'So, do you mean that we pray some definite god while performing rituals in our prescribed "Vedic Activities" is "Anyashraya"?''

'No, if we do such duties as routine to fulfil our vedic

obligation, devoid of any rewords therefore, it is not “Anyashraya”.

‘That is, if there is some motive or expectation behind such actions, it is harmful and an obstacle in pushtimarg.’

‘Quite True.’

39. “PUSHTI-SATSANG”

‘What is the importance of “**Satsang**”?’

“Satsang” saves a man from “**Duhsang**”.

“What do you mean by “Duhsang”?’

“**Duhsang**” means the company of bad elements (persons or environment). Our mind is never devoid of thoughts. Due to “Duhsang”, we develop many adverse attributed like desire, anger, greed, attraction etc. we should get rid of such evils.’

‘How can we get away from “Duhsang”?’

‘Shri Vallabhacharyaji has advised to leave the contact of anybody. If one cannot leave altogether then live in the company of ‘Pious people’ God-loving people (**Bhagavadiya**)’.

‘How could one save himself from the negative effect of “Dushang”?’

‘Shri Harirayji has explained in “**Sikshapatra**” that if he drop water directly on the fire, it will be extinguished, but if keep a vessle on the fire, it is protect fire from getting put off similarly, due to regular “**Sat-sang**”, Duhsang will not be able to destroy our feelings

and attachment with God?’

‘Whose **“Sat-sang”** should we have?’

‘Shri Vallabhacharyaji has narrated the characteristics of the speakers (preachers) of various categories in his **“Jalbhed”** granth. We should accordingly select the suitable preaches or **“Bhagavadiya”** on whom we can rely.’

‘If we do not get such **“Bhagavadiya”**, what should we do?’

‘In such situation, we should read the ‘granthas’ of the Acharyas of pre-dated era and try to comprehend the principles reflected therein, as they are their “Verble forms”. Besides, we should read the stories of 84 and 252 Bhagavadiyas who had followed the principles of pushtimarg with devotion and dedication’. We should offer recite and recollect the meaning of the hymn with which we are innitiated (Brahmsambandha Mantra), so that we may not forget our vow taken before Shri Krushana.’

‘Oh, it is very clear now that how is the **“satsang”** important to follow pushtimarg?’

‘Quite true **“satsang”** is essential for the nurishment of our soul as the food is necessary for maintaining our body. Infact, there should be dialogue with the like minded Vaishnavas so that, the intricacies of the principles are well understood and our courictious becomes strong.’

‘Excellent.’

40. “PUSHTI JIVAN”

‘What is the speciality of pushtimarg?’

‘Pushtimarga is neither merely a “path” not any tradition, not a religion. Rather it is a unique way of life?’

‘Why do you say so?’

‘Because, it is a way of life lived by “**Gopijans**” of Vraj, and had realised “**Shri Krishna**” which is the reward in pushtimarg. Likewise, it is a special system, adopting which coupled with total surrender and full dedication, one can realise Shri Krushana, the “summom bonam”.’

‘What was the system adopted by the “Gopijans”?’

‘The life of Gopijans was oriented towards “Krishna” only. There was ocean of love in their heart for him. Their persuits were directed for the happiness of Krishna. When he was present before them, and they would not forget him even for a moment in his absence?’

‘Can it be said that the system of Pushtimarg is devised by Gopijans?’

‘Definitely that is why ShriVallabhacharyaji considers Gopijans as ‘**Guru**’ in Pushtimarga?’

‘What sort of retualistic system followed by Gopijans’

‘It is said “**Seva rita-prita Vrajajan ki**”, meaning one should love and follow the way of life according to women falk of Vraj. The fulfilment of a devotee’s life is to perform “**Devotional seva**” of his “**sevyā -svarup**” with emotions and dedications to please him.’

‘What are the important aspect of pushtimarg?’

“Total surrenders” is the main ingredients of pushtimarg, for which Shri Vallabhacharyaji has explained in “Vivek Dhairyashraya” growth. He says, **“God does everything according to his own wishes”**. So this fact should be accepted by a devotee, and surrender to his wishes and should not desire otherwise. While doing so, Devotee should keep **patience (Dhairya)** to bear whatever sufferings may be there. That is what is called seeking refuge of God.’

‘Then what is the significance of **‘Samarpan’** (dedication)?’

‘When we are initiated with **“Brahmsambhandh mantra”**, we assert before Shri Krushana for dedicating into him all our belongings including the self. As such, we are supposed to utilize each one of them for Shri Krushana in practice directly and indirectly and thereafter we may make use of them as their **“Prasad”** for our livelihood. That is called **“Dedicated Pushti Jivan”**.

‘What are the important facts of **“Pushti Jivan”**?’
‘These four aspects should be adopted in “Pushti life”. 1. Not to accept refuge of any body except Shri Krushana 2. Nothing to be used in our life which is not offered to Shri Krushana 3. Not to talk anything not essential in life and 4. Duhsang ‘Quite understandable for a pious life! As such, to by adopting these principles in life, one can live a life which can lead to realize Shri Krushana eventually.



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Reason of Publishing_____

'Shuddhadvait Brahmavad' is the philosophical viewpoint of ShriVallabhacharyaji, which he has propounded on the basis of unification of four verble testimonies viz., Veda, Gita, Brahmsutra and Bhagavata. He has preached a ritualistic 'Sadhana Pranali' known as 'Pushtimarg'. He has laid down the basic principles thereof, in his various granthas viz., Shodash granths, Nibandh etc. It is necessary to understand the principal tenets enumerated in these scriptures to follow 'Pushtimarg' in true sense.

In this book - "Pushti Self-study" written as dialogue in lucid language, covering various facets of 'Shuddhadvait Vedant' and 'Pushtimarg', will help the reader to grasp the subject easily and follow this unique path fruitfully.

- Dr. Jayendra Soni